The Blue Boy Chronicles

Exploring the World's Most Powerful Boy

No. 1, 2013 $6.95

Premiere Issue

- Special Three Part Section on Freddy Freeman
- Sivana Jr
- Menaces From Outer Space
- Boy Stories
- The Blue Boy Artists
- Much More!

The
Blue Boy Chronicles
No 1 2013

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Captain Marvel Jr. was originally published by Fawcett Publications (1941-1953). The current copyright and trademark to Captain Marvel Jr. are owned by DC Comics Inc.

Publisher, Editor-in-Chief, Writer, Designer: Donald D. Ensign
***FCA* Editor**: P.C. Hamerlinck
Associate Editor: John G. Pierce
Copy Editor: Steve MacDonald

Key to Comic book Abbreviations

Example: The Blue Boy journeys to a tropical island (MC #48-95) that is run by crooks. MC means ***Master Comics***. 48 means issue #48 (March 1944) and 95 means the story number where this story is located in the Captain Marvel Jr. canon. Each Captain Marvel Jr story has its own story number.

AGC- America's Greatest Comics
AHC- All Hero Comics
CMJ- Captain Marvel Jr.
MC- Master Comics
MF- The Marvel Family
WC- Whiz Comics

See capmarjr.blogspot.com for full list of stories and story numbers.
February 4, 2013-April 29, 2013

The Blue Boy Chronicles Vol 1, No. 1, 2013. Published annually. Published in cooperation with New Creation Now. Editor & Publisher: Don Ensign. e-mail: donensign@mail.com. Editorial Office: 250-A S Paseo Cerro, Green Valley, AZ 85614. For publication updates see: capmarjr.blogspot.com. Print copies available from editorial address. Single copies: $6.95 (plus $2.00 s & h). All Editorial matter © Donald D. Ensign. Printed in the USA. Front cover is a detail from *Captain Marvel Jr.* #111, July 1952. Art by Bud Thompson.

The First Word

.Why CMJ?

Because he is not the Big Red Cheese, Captain Marvel himself.

The Importance of CMJ

Besides Captain Marvel Fawcett's Blue Boy published more stories than any Golden Age Comic book superhero. With 600 stories and over 5000 pages devoted to the character over a 12-year period, the exploits of the World's Most Powerful Boy make a fertile field for research and analysis.

The Popularity of CMJ

It has often been related that *Captain Marvel Adventures* for a time outsold Superman during the 1940s. This fact certainly led National Comics (now DC Comics) to vigorously pursue their copyright infringement lawsuit against Fawcett. According to comics historian Mike Benton Captain Marvel Jr. sold roughly 40-45 % of *Captain Marvel Adventures*[1]. If *CMA* sold 1 million copies (at least for a time) Captain Marvel Jr. sold around 400,000 copies. Those were very good figures for any period of comic book publishing history.

Secondly Fawcett Publications had the ability to churn out stories of their characters second to none. As mentioned above during Fawcett's tenure, hundreds of Captain Marvel Jr. tales were published from 1941 through 1953.

Personal Journey

As a teenager, I became involved with the just developing comics fandom of the 1960s. One of the trends dominating that period was a fascination with the comics published during the 1940s. For a kid who was barely even born in the 1940s this period seemed like a Golden Age where the super hero was one of the dominant trends in comics publishing. Early fandom was led by those whose comic book sensibilities were shaped in the 1940s. People such as Dick Lupoff, Jerry

Freddy's Freeman's first encounter with Captain Nazi. *WC* #25-181. Art by CC Beck & Mac Raboy. © 1941, Fawcett Publications.

Bails, Roy Thomas, Ray Miller and others produced articles elucidating the glories of this bygone period. Two of the major editor/writers of this early period of fan activity who influenced my thinking on how to approach comic book history were Bob Jennings and Rick Weingroff.

Jennings produced a fanzine throughout the 1960s (was later revived for a time in the 1970s) titled *The Comic World*. Jennings and others produced articles that went below the surface and in-depth on specific characters and comic book series. Jennings (and his fellow writers) tried to actually analyze the strips they were covering within the context of the times. Even with the numerous typos that popped up these articles were fascinating expositions into the world of the First Heroic Age. Rick Weingroff, with his *Slam Bang* and *Tint* zines, likewise delved deeply into analysis, even at times from a psychological approach. In the early 1970s, James Steranko with his two volume *History of Comics* devoted lengthy chapters to characters and comics. Michael Fleisher went beyond even these efforts and produced massive Encyclopedia tomes dedicated to Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman.

What we will attempt to do with ***The Blue Boy Chronicles*** is to follow in the footsteps of Jennings, Weingroff, Steranko, Fleisher and others in bringing indepth coverage of one of the premiere super heroes of the 1940s.

In 1964, on a family visit to one of my brothers in Portland, Oregon, I went to a used book shop and pursued a couple of issues of *Captain Marvel Adventures*.

Being much enamored of the then current Silver Age comics, I was less than taken with the charms of Captain Marvel. However, I kept reading good things written by older fans on the greatness of Captain Marvel (i.e. "One Man's Family" by Roy Thomas).

So, several years later, I decided to give the Fawcett heroes a second chance. I happened on a fanzine ad for inexpensive copies of Fawcett comics. I bought a number of them centering on *Captain Marvel Jr.* and *Master Comics*. Perhaps Cap Jr. was a bit more realistic (more to my liking) that his namesake. I entertained the notion of doing a fanzine article on the character. However, life intervened and this was put on hold for over 30 years. These comics followed me over the course of many moves.

***Alter Ego* & Digital Comics Museum**

Finally, with the revival of *Alter Ego* and the encouragement of P.C. Hamerlinck (*Fawcett Collectors of America)*, I produced an article on the post war years of Captain Marvel Jr. serially published in *Alter Ego* #18, 19, 20, 21 (2002-2003). In the ensuing years with the advent of internet sites such as the Digital Comics Museum, I did further research and felt compelled to extend the narrative of Captain Marvel Jr.'s Fawcett years. The World's Mightiest Boy's hundreds of stories is such a rich vein of comics history that should be tapped, analyzed, written about and not forgotten.

While Captain Marvel Jr. has been the topic of a number of survey articles both in print and on the web his story has not been told in depth. Hopefully, ***The Blue Boy Chronicles*** can in some small way fill this void in Golden Age Comics scholarship. What follow is not meant to be the last word on Fawcett Comics' World's Mightiest Boy, but a springboard for others to explore this and other Golden Age greats.

This editor has read and studied roughly 565 Cap Jr. stories (over 90% of the total). While the remaining stories undoubtedly contain interesting nuggets, it is time to give the Blue Cheese the coverage he deserves.

Goal

The goal here is to present the wealth of Captain Marvel Jr. Fawcett era stories with accuracy and respect. This doesn't mean that we will shy away from criticism where it is warranted. However we will evaluate the stories, characters and themes within the context of the times that they were written in. This publication will emphasize those characters, stories and themes of Captain Marvel Jr. While other publications center on the creators of this material (and rightly so) this magazine will primarily focus on the work of those creators.

Steve MacDonald once asked whether there is a meta-story that encompasses the Golden Age Captain Marvel Jr. My answer to that was that he was one of the top "boy" comic book heroes of the 1940s. His adventures were tailored to appeal to young boys as Mary Marvel stories were made to attract a young girl audience. Captain Marvel Jr., perhaps even more than Captain Marvel himself, was the ultimate older brother. Perhaps even more than that-- the young reader of that time could be Cap Jr. himself.

The Blue Boy Chronicles will have two emphases. Many of the articles appearing in these pages will provide summaries of stories that relate to the topic under discussion. These are presented as a tool for future researchers to delve deeper into the comics from the First Heroic Age. Also, we will be presenting articles that will accent analysis and provide ideas on how to understand the stories on a deeper level.

Captain Marvel names his marvelous protege. *CMJ* #1-13. Art by Al Carreno. © 1942, Fawcett Fawcett Publications.

Note on References

Many of the statements in the articles are followed with reference notes directly related to specific stories. Also, we have given each of the 600 Captain Marvel Jr. stories its own reference number. For example, *CMJ* #59-304 refers to *Captain Marvel Jr.* #59 (March 1948) and that issue's fourth story, "The Boy Hermit". The issues of Captain Marvel Jr.'s own title contain anywhere from two to five CMJ stories. The complete listing of issue story titles are online at capmarjr.blogspot.com

Contributors

We are always looking for contributors in the form of articles, letters of comment, and corrections. Please let us know what you would like to do as it relates to the Golden Age Captain Marvel Jr.

Endnotes:
1. Mike Benton, *The Illustrated History of Super Hero Comics of the Golden Age*, Taylor Publishing Co., 1992, p. 156

The Publishing History of the Golden Age

Captain Marvel Jr.

This overview article briefly sums up the publishing history of Captain Marvel Jr. Over the years how did the stories and themes change to fit the needs of the times?

Capt. Marvel Jr.
AND THE ROBOMBS OF THE RISING SUN !
THE BUGLE
ROBOMBS STRIKE AMERICAN-HELD PHILIPPINES !
JAP ROBOMBS ARE RAINING DOWN ON AMERICAN FORCES IN THE PHILIPPINES ! THE MYSTERY IS --- WHERE ARE THE ROBOMBS COMING FROM? ALLIED HEADQUARTERS BAFFLED . . . .

Captain Marvel Jr. battles Captain Nippon in "The Robombs of the Rising Sun" *CMJ* #31-156. © 1945, Fawcett Fawcett Publications.

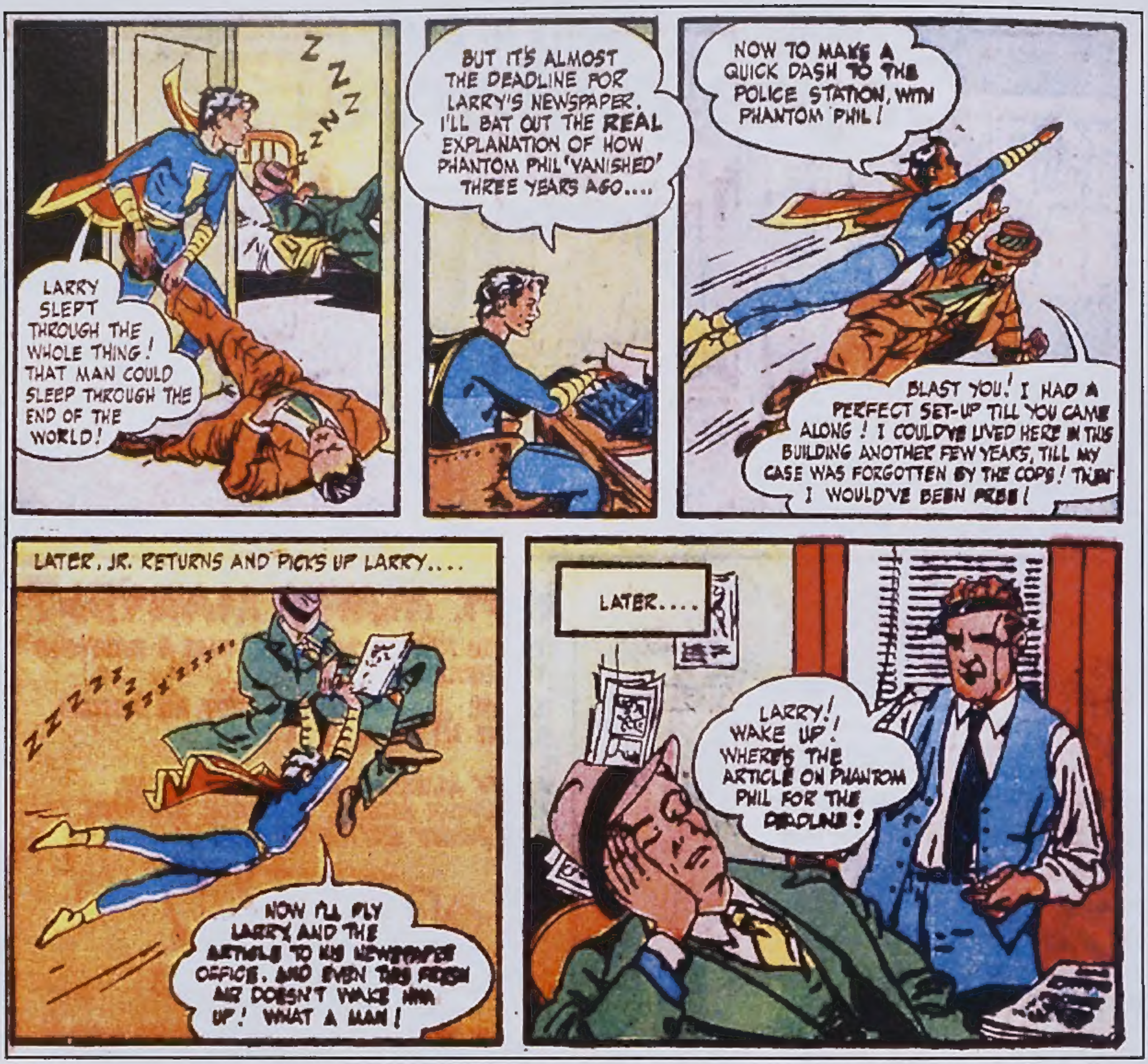
It seems fair to divide the publishing history of Captain Marvel Jr. into three periods. The first period was the War years (1941-1945), the second the Post War or Noir years (1946-1949) and the 1950s (1950-1953).

The War Years

Captain Marvel Jr. was created by Ed "France" Herron at the request of the Fawcett management. Mac Raboy designed the visual look of Freddy Freeman and Captain Marvel Jr.

Unlike Captain Marvel, Bulletman and some of the other early Fawcett comic book heroes, Captain Marvel Jr. owes his existence directly to events leading into World War II.[1] Major villains during these years like Captain Nazi, Captain Nippon, The Pied Piper of Himmler, Sabbac, Count Spectrum, Mr. Morpheus (and even Mr. Macabre sells out to the Nazis (*MC* #31-11, *CMJ* #2-20), provided Captain Marvel Jr. with abundant opportunities for Axis smashing. Listed here are the non-major villain stories representing the Axis threat. [Future articles in The Blue Boy Chronicles will deal with CapJr.'s major wartime foes.]

Through the war years, Captain Marvel Jr. confronts a parade of German and Japanese spies and saboteurs. The Blue Boy matches wits with spies like Snaiki Yaiki (MC #25-5), helps the Polish underground (MC #29-9), battles sabotage on home front military bases (MC #30-10), assists the Chetniks in Yugoslavia resist the Nazis, foils a German helicopter bombing of New York City (AHC #1-34), and stops German saboteurs in New England (MC #37-39). The Blue Boy of Power thwarts German secret agents (MC #38-44), halts a Nazi U-boat invasion of an undersea city (CMJ #7-46), stops a modern pirate selling slaves to the Nazis (MC #39-49), defeats a Nazi regiment on U.S. soil (CMJ #8-51), smashes a time machine that could help the Nazis win the war (CMJ #8-54), crushes Hitler's attempts to blast the U.S. from his moonbase and thwarts a Nazi invasion of Mars (CMJ #10-61), stops a Japanese "Yellow Curse" plot to turn Americans in Japanese (CMJ #10-62), and destroys a German submarine base at the city docks (CMJ #10-64). The World's Mightiest Boy battles Hitler's Dream Soldier (MC #42-65), fights more


Z Z Z Z Z
LARRY SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE THING! THAT MAN COULD SLEEP THROUGH THE END OF THE WORLD!
BUT IT'S ALMOST THE DEADLINE FOR LARRY'S NEWSPAPER. I'LL BAT OUT THE REAL EXPLANATION OF HOW PHANTOM PHIL 'VANISHED' THREE YEARS AGO....
NOW TO MAKE A QUICK DASH TO THE POLICE STATION, WITH PHANTOM PHIL!
BLAST YOU! I HAD A PERFECT SET-UP TILL YOU CAME ALONG! I COULD'VE LIVED HERE IN THIS BUILDING ANOTHER FEW YEARS, TILL MY CASE WAS FORGOTTEN BY THE COPS! THEN I WOULD'VE BEEN FREE!
LATER, JR. RETURNS AND PICKS UP LARRY....
NOW I'LL FLY LARRY AND THE ARTICLE TO HIS NEWSPAPER OFFICE. AND EVEN THIS FRESH AIR DOESN'T WAKE HIM UP! WHAT A MAN!
LATER....
LARRY! WAKE UP! WHERE'S THE ARTICLE ON PHANTOM PHIL FOR THE DEADLINE!

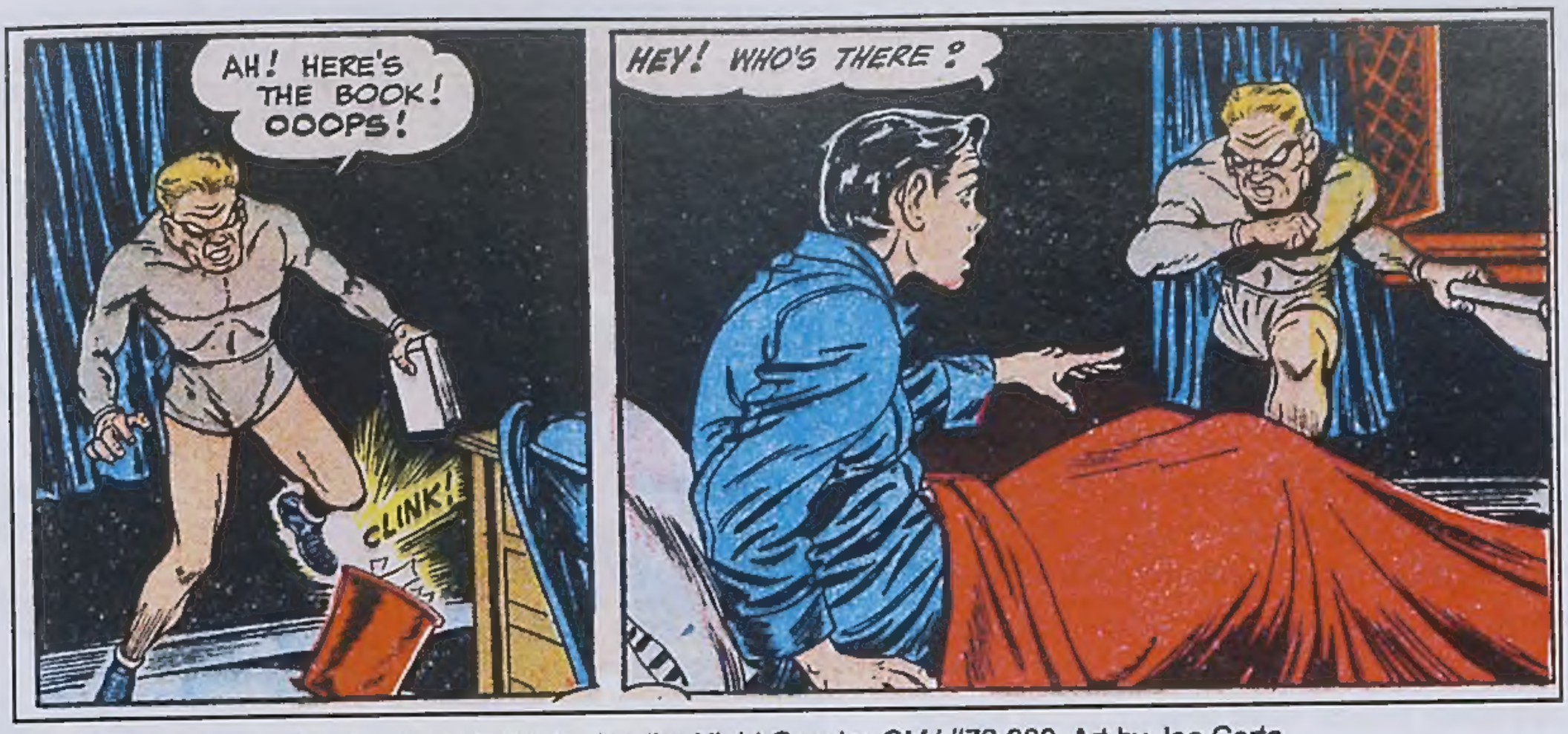
The Phantom Crook and Lightning Larry Davis *CMJ* #39-189 Art by Bud Thompson. © 1946, Fawcett Publications.

homefront labor saboteurs (CMJ #11-68), battles alongside the Russians in Stalingrad (MC #43-70), and demolishes a gigantic Japanese floating island (CMJ #12-71). Dr. Sivana and Cap Jr. team up to defeat a Nazi invasion (CMJ #12-73), and the Blue Boy stops Nazi scientist Von Krumm from poisoning the city's water supply (MC #45-80).

In 1944-dated issues of Master Comics and Captain Marvel Jr. the World's Most Powerful Boy continues his struggle against the Axis. The Blue Boy rescues a group of newsboys from being killed by Nazi spies (*CMJ* #15-86), and in a big-foot style humor illustrated adventure, CMJ battles a super-powered Corporal Hitler Jr. (*MC* #47-90). Cap Jr. spoils a Japanese plot to poison edible fish in the Pacific northwest (*CMJ* #16-91), and defeats a Nazi scheme using "radium-carbo rays" to destroy war related objects (*CMJ* #71-97).

Sylvester Jones helps Cap Jr. shoot down the Nazi "Model Airplane Menace" (*CMJ* #17- 99) the World's Mightiest Boy takes on Professor Vultur, a sort of Nazi Hawkman (*CMJ* #18-101, *CMJ* #24-128). He rescues movie star celebrities promoting War Bonds (*CMJ* #20-112) and prevents a combined German-Japanese invasion via the Panama Canal (*CMJ* #25-132). This year ends with CMJ taking a young bully to Greece to see the Nazi oppression and fight against it (*CMJ* #25-134).

With the coming of 1945 there is a marked decline in wartime related stories, especially those dealing with the Nazi threat. It seems as if the Axis was on the ropes and comic book readers were looking for other foes for their four color heroes to fight against. The Blue Boy flies to Alaska and defeats the "Totem of Terror," a Japanese plot to destroy a vital highway (CMJ



Freddy Freeman confronts a late night intruder, the Night Crawler *CMJ* #72-380. Art by Joe Certa.
© 1949, Fawcett Publications.

#26-138), stops a wicked Japanese scheme to use volcanos to annihilate U.S. cities (MC #58-139), and uncovers a plot to blame an exiled German scientist for underground coal fires (CMJ #27-142). Cap Jr. flies to the South Pacific to help out American bomber pilots against a Japanese CMJ impostor (CMJ #28-145). Cap Jr. matches wits with famous psychiatrist Dr. Hugo, who turns out to be a German saboteur bent on destroying Boulder Dam (CMJ #30-153) and in the same issue, General Nippon and Dr. Satsu cross sharks with flying fish to produce savage flying sharks, which the World's Most Invincible Boy dumps over Tokyo creating great chaos (CMJ #30-154). The Japanese apparently have one final fling against Cap Jr. with the "Robombs of the of the Rising Sun" (CMJ #31-156). Master Comics #63-159 (Sept.-Oct. 1945) presents a German plot to "eliminate America's most important senators!" which CapJr. prevents. This story appeared after Germany surrendered in May 1945.

During the War period amongst all the Axis-busting there was the sprouting of different genres which grew into full flower in later periods. Legend and fantasy present themselves in "CMJ meets Paul Bunyan," (CMJ #3-27) "The Hilarious Trolls" (CMJ #5-37), and "The Fountain of Youth" (CMJ #5 -38). Science fiction-themed stories begin in an Otto Binder-scripted outer space yarn, with the World's Mightiest Boy battling the wicked King Kull on Mars (CMJ #6-41), the excellent 1944 time travel tale, "Captain Marvel Jr. Meets Himself In the 21st Century" (CMJ #17-96), and others. Supernatural ghost stories began with another Otto Binder story called the "Ghost Jam Session" (CMJ #7-48). A rather tame horror story called "Professor Quiddle's Zombie" appears in 1943 (CMJ #12-72). Chief among a legion of mad (and not so mad) genius scientists was Dr. Sivana, Captain Marvel's premiere nemesis, who gave The Blue Boy problems in the 1943 tale "Pills of Peril" (CMJ #4-32).[2] Costumed villains unrelated to the Axis powers also appear, including the Black Ace (CMJ #7-45), Captain Monster (MC #52-114), and the Black King (CMJ #26-136).

Post-War Years (1946-1949)

The Post-War period was truly a transitional period. Stories with even the mention or memory of World War II were almost non-existent.[3] Several things distinguished the post war period from the time of world conflict just before it.

First, the Axis villains were gone. With the exception of one or two inventory spy stories. Captain Nazi, Captain Nippon, Sabbac, Mr. Macabre and the rest vanished into comic book limbo.[4]

Second, CMJ received his own Sivana family arch-foe in the person of Sivana Jr., the World's Wickediest Boy, son of Dr. Sivana. Sivana, Jr's first of many battles with the World's Mightiest Boy happened in March 1946 (CMJ #36-172). Besides Sivana Jr., Cap Jr's worthy adversaries were surprisingly few. The most noteworthy was the Acrobat, who appeared first in an unusual three-part story (CMJ #41-198, 199, 200) which led to several sequels. There were some interesting one-story villains such as Sky Hawk (MC #95-336), Vacuum Master (CMJ #72-379), The Night Crawler (CMJ #72-380), Dr. Satano (CMJ #74-391), and Crime Man (CMJ (#80-425), but the editors apparently didn't believe them worthy

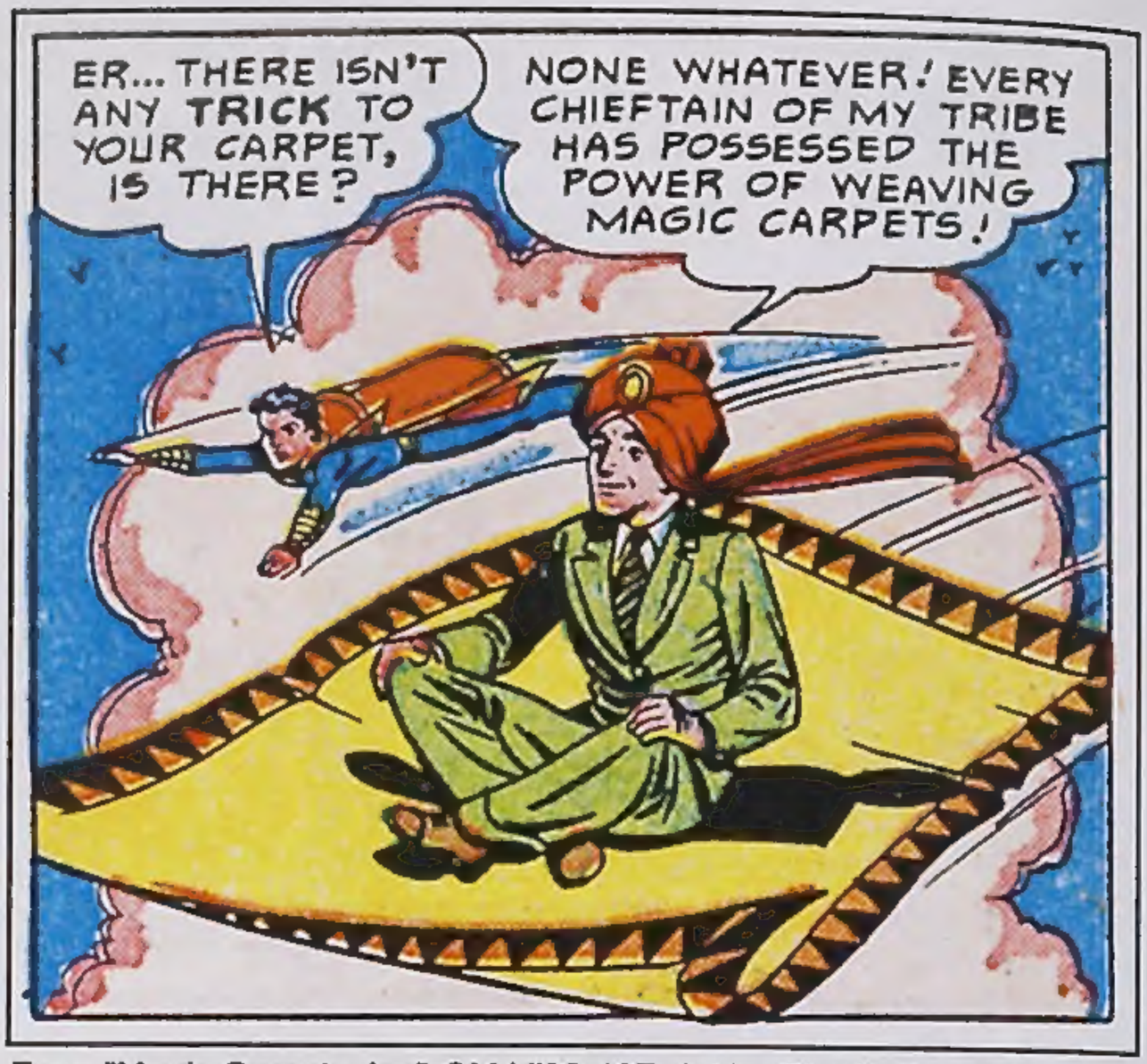
enough to have a second shot at the World's Most Powerful Boy. Actually, Cap Jr. clearly outclassed all of his foes. Some of the dumbest villains such as Blockman (MC #91-312), the Nutty Squirrel (MF #1-365), and the Clown of Crime (MF #32-371) appeared during this period.

Third, Freddy Freeman got a new home at Mrs Wagner's Boarding House in August 1947. "Captain Marvel Jr Finds A Home" (CMJ #52-260) was a pivotal story where Freddy moved in and gained a new cast of supporting characters who contributed plot situations to the series.

Fourth, the artists became more distinguishable during this period. Mac Raboy had left Fawcett by this time and, in 1948, he had begun work on the *Flash Gordon* Sunday strip, which he continued until his death in 1967. Chief among the post-war artists were Bud Thompson, Joe Certa, Kurt Schaffenberger, Charlie Tomsey and Sheldon Moldoff.

Fifth, besides his appearances in Master Comics and his own title, Captain Marvel Jr. appeared as a member of The Marvel Family. The Marvel Family started in December 1945 (#1) and ended with #89 (January 1954). Captain Marvel Jr., along with Captain Marvel and Mary Marvel, appeared in every Marvel Family story and often Cap Jr. had in his own strip in the title. There seems to have been a post-war surge in the popularity of the Blue Boy. In 1948, 72 CMJ stories were produced by Fawcett, the highest of any year during the Blue Boy's publishing run.

Several genres, replaced the war stories during this period. Tales where Cap Jr. battled crime became common such as "Crime Wave" (CMJ #37-178) and "The Crooks Who Couldn't be Caught" (CMJ #63- 325). Science Fiction stories began appearing more commonly during this time. There were alien invasion stories such as "The Flying Eye" (MF #21-305) and "The Unknown Invasion" (CMJ #78-413), stories on other planets such as, "The Menace From Space" (CMJ #60-307), and time travel stories such as "CMJ Finds the First Civilization" (CMJ #56-283). Whimsical fantasy stories appeared such as "The Walking Tree," (CMJ 65-339), "The Greeting Cards of Hate" (CMJ #67-351) and "The Terrible Topsy Turvy Table" (CMJ #70-370). There were supernatural and mild horror yarns such as "CMJ Haunts the the Ghost Vigilantes" (CMJ #38-184), "CMJ Faces a Grave Situation"


ER... THERE ISN'T ANY TRICK TO YOUR CARPET, IS THERE?
NONE WHATEVER! EVERY CHIEFTAIN OF MY TRIBE HAS POSSESSED THE POWER OF WEAVING MAGIC CARPETS!

From "Magic Carpets, Inc" *CMJ* #92-487. Art by Charlie Tomsey.
© 1950, Fawcett Publications.

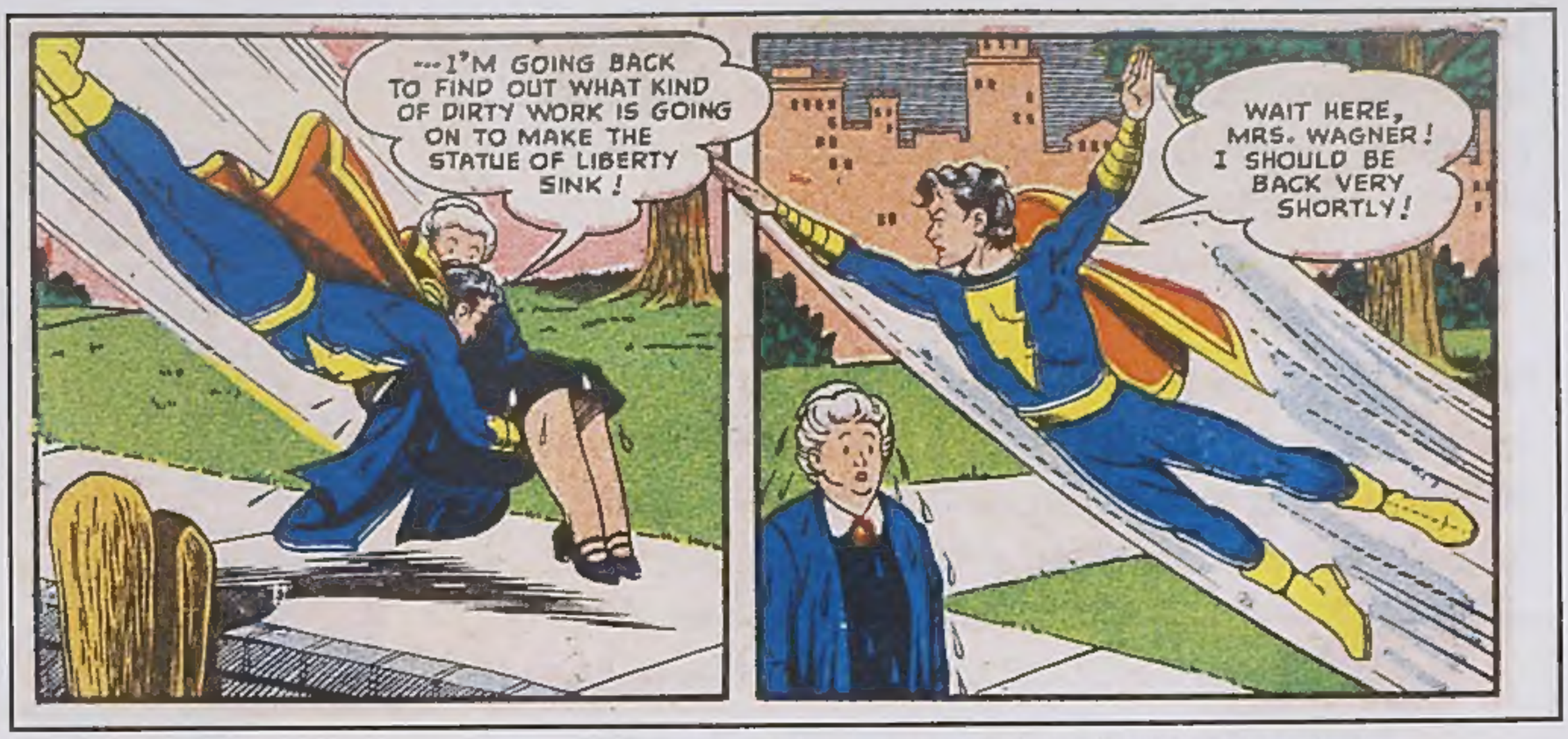
(CMJ #40-195), "The March of the Dead" (CMJ #43-212) and "The Ghost of Captain Marvel Jr." (CMJ #71-376). There was even a few rare western-themed stories such as "CMJ Duels the Outlaw" (CMJ #64-331) and "The Outlaw of Crooked Creek (CMJ #75-397), which mirrored the popular western comics of the times.

Stories that taught good morals, positive attitudes, and fought prejudice, such as "The Road Back" (CMJ #57-291), "CMJ Battles Worry" (CMJ #70-367), "The Two Roads" (CMJ #77-410), "The UnAmerican Way" (CMJ #48-239), and "The Hooded Horrors" (CMJ #66-343) were increasingly present during this time. Perhaps this was in part because of the growing criticism of the comic book industry.

The 1950s (1950-1953)

The numerous story genres that were started in the previous periods came into full flower in the early 1950s. There were Sivana Jr. stories, the best of which was the three-part epic in Cap Jr's centennial issue (CMJ #100-526, 527, 528). While we saw the last of the Acrobat in early 1950 (MC #112-434), there are several significant villains introduced in 1952 like Panther Man (MC #126-546), the Mad Mongol Monster (CMJ #115-578), and Vampira (CMJ#116-583).

Various kinds of science fiction yarns were written into the Cap Jr. canon. There were giant monster stories like "The Giant Ice


---I'M GOING BACK TO FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF DIRTY WORK IS GOING ON TO MAKE THE STATUE OF LIBERTY SINK!
WAIT HERE, MRS. WAGNER! I SHOULD BE BACK VERY SHORTLY!

CapJr. saves Mrs. Wagner from drowning in New York Harbor. *MC* #107-406. Art by Kurt Schaffenberger. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

Monster" (*CMJ* #91-480) and "The Worm That Grew" (*MF* #47-455). There were time travel tales like "The Man Who Lived History" (*CMJ* #83-442) and "The Tunnel to the Future" (*CMJ* #99-524). There were outer space alien menace stories such as "The Silicon Monster" (*CMJ* #92-486), "The Space Fisherman" (*CMJ* #995-501) and "Yblees, the Planet Hunter" (*CMJ* #109-557). There were robot stories such as "The Robot Farmer" (*CMJ* #(87-464) and "Sivana Jr's Friendly Robot" (*CMJ* #93-493). There were doomsday stories such "The Day the World Almost Ended" (*CMJ* #84-445) and "CMJ Fights the Cosmic War Dust" (*CMJ* #91-491). There was a "what if" tales showing how history would be different if Capt. Marvel Jr. never existed. This was explored in "Captain Marvel Jr. Vanishes" (*CMJ* #96-507) what if Captain Marvel Jr. had two heads (*CMJ* #106-548) and what if the Blue Boy became "The Funniest Looking Boy in the World" (*CMJ* #117-587) were somewhat similar to the 1960s Superman "Imaginary Stories".

There were personality stories based on Captain Marvel Jr. (*CMJ* #111-565) or Freddy Freeman (*CMJ* #89-473). Human interest tales centered on other people cropped up such as "The Boy Who Wanted to Be Famous" (*CMJ* #85-452) and "The Hill Billy Capt. Marvel Jr." (*CMJ* #87-462). Legend and myth provided story material such as, "Magic Carpets, Inc " (*CMJ* #92-487) and "Slave of the Genie" (*CMJ* #102-535). Animal related stories appeared such as "The Mystery of the Vanishing Whales" (MF #46-449), "The Battle of the Beasts and Birds" (*CMJ* #90-479) and "CMJ Meets Millionairedale" (*CMJ* #103-538).

Horror stories surfaced such as "The Horror Dimension" (*CMJ* #107-551) and the excellent and truly macabre "The Thousand Eyed Idol of Doom" (*CMJ* #115-579). The Blue Boy has his share of haunted house stories (*CMJ* #89-473), werewolf tales (*CMJ* #117-585), and ghost stories (*MC* #133-589). Offbeat fantasy yarns continued such as "The Battle of Imaginations" (*CMJ* #81-429), "CMJ Battles Big Smokey" (*CMJ* #102-533) and "The Palace of Lost Ideas" (*CMJ* #104-542).

While there was a definite decrease in using common criminals and gangsters during this period, there were still some "crime" stories such as "Capt. Marvel Jr. Battles the Lords of the Underworld" (*CMJ* #94-499) and "The Battling Underworld" (*MC* #121-506).

Also, even though World War II was in the distant past, there were several stories centering on the Korean War, such as "The Note From Nowhere" (*MC* #132-588) and "The Regiment That Was Afraid to Fight" (*CMJ* #119-594).

In summary, the first years of the Captain Marvel Jr. stories were dominated by World War II, even though other themes were definitely present. The immediate post-war period contained the flowering of many different genres. There were stories that involved normal criminals (often with an unusual gimmick), and evil scientists epitomized by Sivana, Jr. There were threats from outer space, supernatural foes and costumes villains. The 1950s were much the same as the post war period with a few stories involving the Korean War. In future issues of ***The Blue Boy Chronicles*** we will examine many of these genres and story types in detail.

Endnotes

1 In some ways, Cap Jr's origin is similar to Timely Comics' Captain America. Steve Rogers was the test subject of a super soldier serum experiment which was disrupted by a Nazi agent who killed the professor who had invented the serum. Freddy Freeman was knocked out of his fishing boat and left for dead by super-villain Captain Nazi (who killed his grandfather).

2 Dr. Sivana fought Cap Jr. on several other occasions during this time, and even into the early post war period.

3 The early 1946 story, "A Monument to Peace" (*CMJ* #36-173) was perhaps an inventory WW II spy story. The mid-1949 tale, "The Tarnished War Hero" (*MC* #105-394), relates the story of a unjustly accused WW II veteran.

4 Adolf Hitler shows up as a ghost with two other specters, Nero and Ghengis Khan, in the October 1946 tale "The Ghosts of Evil" (*MC* #73-209).

Note: These appendices are presented to allow the reader to understand how Captain Marvel Jr. fit into Fawcett Comics' publishing scheme.

Appendix A: War Years

From 1940 to 1945 super heroes headlined the Fawcett comics line as they did for many other publishing companies. *Whiz Comics* housed Captain Marvel, Ibis, Golden Arrow, and Spy Smasher. *Master Comics* led with Bulletman, Minute Man, Captain Marvel Jr. and Radar. *Wow Comics* had Mr. Scarlet, Commando Yank, Phantom Eagle and later Mary Marvel. Captain Marvel, Ibis, Golden Arrow, Spy Smasher, Bulletman, Minute Man, Captain Marvel Jr. and Mary Marvel all had their own titles. Hoppy the Marvel Bunny began in *Fawcett Funny Animals* #1 (Dec. 1942) and would receive his own title in December 1945. Captain Midnight, star of radio and films, came to Fawcett with his first issue in the Fall of 1942. It should be noted that the Fawcett anthology titles contained also many humor, western, adventure, detective, science fiction, and magician strips.

Adventure comics such as *Don Winslow of the Navy* started his Fawcett voyage in February 1942, and Nyoka, Jungle Girl first appeared in *Master Comics* #50 (May 1944).

List of Fawcett Comics from *Capt. Marvel Jr.* #64, August 1948. © 1948, Fawcett Publications.

Size

Master Comics, where the original Captain Marvel Jr. series first appeared in issue #22 January 1942 (co-starring in the Bulletman strip) and the next month (#23), in his own strip, was a 68-page comic until #43, (November 1943), and reduced to a 52-pager in March 1944 (#48). By June 1944 (#51) it had slipped to 44 pages and by October 1944 (#55) it shrunk to 36 pages.

MASTER COMICS
OVER THE TOP —
AT THE ENEMY!
IT'S CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. — SLUGGING HIS WAY TO VICTORY!!!!!!
DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE OF THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST BOY IN THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST ADVENTURES! EVERY MONTH — GET
CAPTAIN MARVEL JR.
ORDER IT AT YOUR NEWSSTAND . . . . . 10¢

An ad for for Captain Marvel Jr. from *Master Comics* #45 (December 1943). © 1945, Fawcett Publications.

Captain Marvel Jr. started as a 68-pager (64 interior pages) with its first November 1942 issue. With issue #11 (September 1943) it reduced in size to 60 pages, and with #15 (January 1944) it again decreased to 52 pages. By June 1944 (#20) it again losts pages to 44 pages and two months later August 1944 (#22) it had been reduced to 36 pages-- half the size it had been only a year before. This smaller size continued throughout 1944 and all of 1945. The issue of size/page count mattered because the stories were longer when more pages were available. As the page count per issue decreased the editors decided to reduce the length of the stories rather than the number of stories. This seemed to be the case across the early comic book industry.

Appendix B: Post War Years

The movie-related Western comics proved to be strong for Fawcett during this period and well into the 1950s. *Wow Comics*, the home of Mary Marvel, Mr. Scarlet and Pinky, the Phantom Eagle, and Commando Yank, turned into *Real Western Hero* and then *Western Hero* in September 1948. Mr. Scarlet, Phantom Eagle, and the rest entered into comic book limbo.The title *Mary Marvel* began in December 1945 (along with *The Marvel Family*) and after 28 issues ended in September 1948. The title then changed to *Monte Hale Western*, and Mary had to make do with team appearances with Captain Marvel and CMJ in *The Marvel Family* (she also had a few solo appearances in *Marvel Family* after that). Hoppy the Marvel Bunny concluded his own title in September 1947. Captain Midnight was grounded with his 67th Fawcett issue in Autumn 1948. The title was then changed to *Sweethearts*. Infrequently published comics were dropped during this time like *Bulletman* (#16 Spring 1946), *Golden Arrow/Western* (#6, Spring 1947), *Ibis the Invisible* (#6, Spring 1948), and *Lance O'Casey* (#4, Summer, 1948). The long running Bulletman strip in *Master Comics* signed off with issue #106 (August 1949). Radar, the international policeman, who sometimes bumped Capt. Marvel Jr. from his lead spot in *Master Comics*, ended his tenure in that book with #87, January 1948. Likewise Spy Smasher changed his identity to Crime Smasher in *Whiz Comics* #77 (July 1946). Crime Smasher lasted only until *Whiz Comics* #83 (March 1947). *Don Winslow of the Navy* was mustered out of his own title with #64 (December 1948).

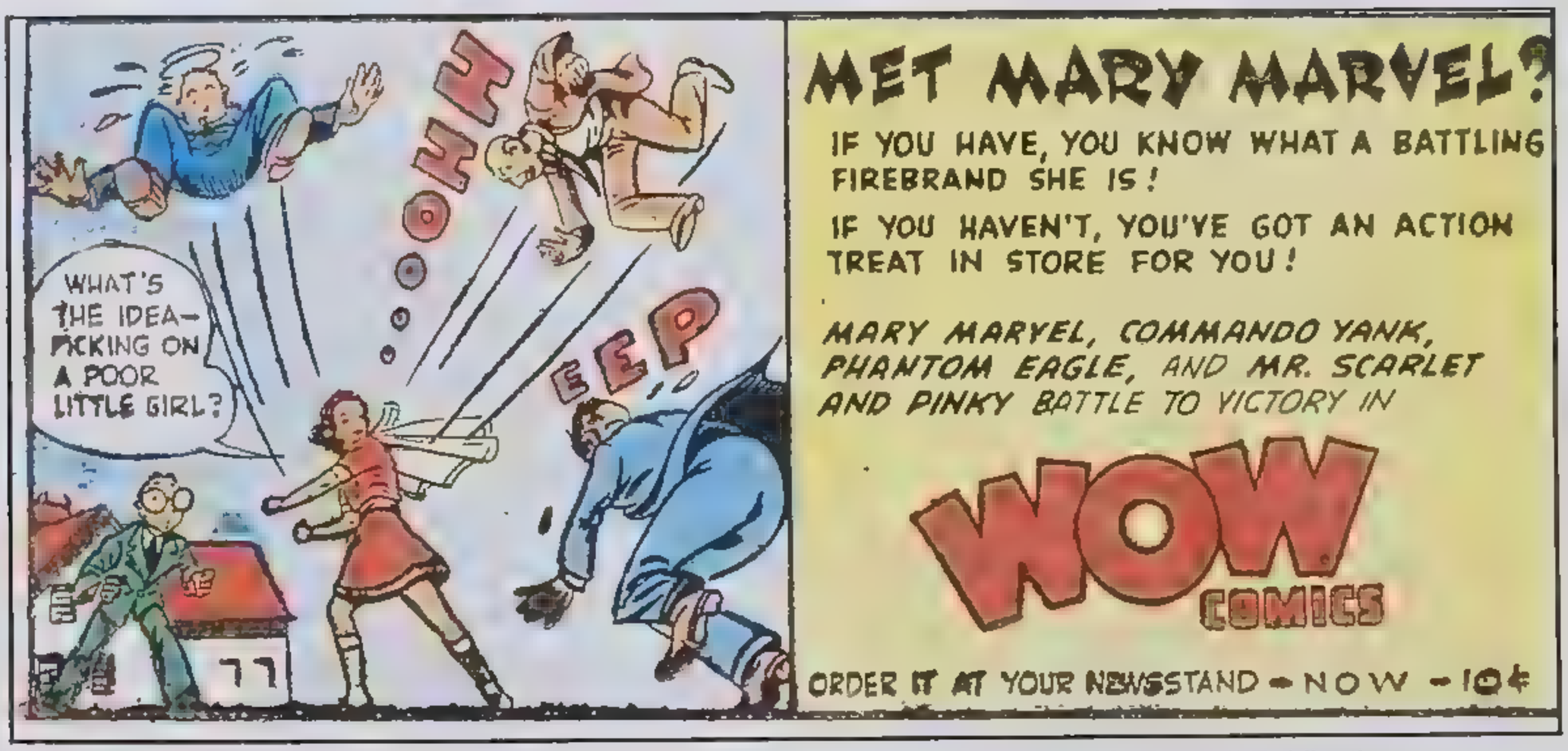
Fawcett's major publishing offensive during this period lay in Western comics. Besides *Real Western Heroes* and *Monte Hale Western* there were *Hopalong Cassidy* (#2, Summer 1946), *Tom Mix* Western (January 1948), *Gabby Hayes Western* (November 1948), *Rocky Lane* (May 1949), *Lash LaRue Western* (Summer 1949) and the hybrid *Cowboy Love* (July 1949).

During this period Fawcett launched into romance comics not only with *Sweethearts* but with *Life Story* #1 (April 1949), *Romantic Secrets* #1 (September 1949), *Romantic Story* #1 (November 1949), *Romantic Western* #1 (Winter 1949), *Exciting Romances* (1949), *Love Memories* (1949), and *Sweetheart Diary* (1949).

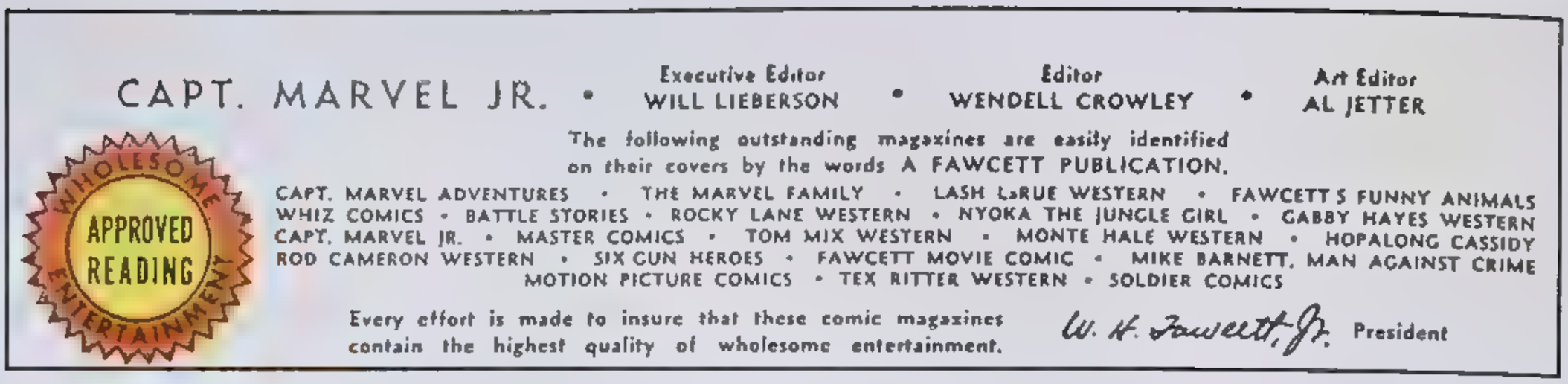
Size

In May 1946 *Master Comics*, with the publication of issue #68, grew again to 52 pages. It continued with 52 pages until June 1949 (#104) when a 36 page issue appeared. *Master Comics* then vacillated between 52 and 36 pages until June 1951 (#122), when it stayed at 36 pages until the end of it run in April 1953 (#133). Except for several issues in 1944, *Master Comics* was a monthly until August 1950 (#117), when it became bi-monthly.

It wasn't until *Captain Marvel Jr.* #37 (April 1946) that its page count increased to 52 pages. It continued with 52 pages until #74 (June 1949) when a 36-page issue appeared. *Captain Marvel Jr.* then vacillated between 52 and 36 pages until #99 (July 1951) when it stayed at 36 pages until the end of it run with #119 (June 1953).


WHAT'S THE IDEA— PICKING ON A POOR LITTLE GIRL?
OOH
EEP
77
MET MARY MARVEL?
IF YOU HAVE, YOU KNOW WHAT A BATTLING FIREBRAND SHE IS!
IF YOU HAVEN'T, YOU'VE GOT AN ACTION TREAT IN STORE FOR YOU!
MARY MARVEL, COMMANDO YANK, PHANTOM EAGLE, AND MR. SCARLET AND PINKY BATTLE TO VICTORY IN
WOW COMICS
ORDER IT AT YOUR NEWSSTAND — NOW — 10¢

Ad for Mary Marvel in *Wow Comics* from *Captain Marvel Jr* #40, July 1946. © 1946, Fawcett Publications.


CAPT. MARVEL JR. • Executive Editor WILL LIEBERSON • Editor WENDELL CROWLEY • Art Editor AL JETTER
The following outstanding magazines are easily identified on their covers by the words A FAWCETT PUBLICATION.
CAPT. MARVEL ADVENTURES • THE MARVEL FAMILY • LASH LaRUE WESTERN • FAWCETT'S FUNNY ANIMALS
WHIZ COMICS • BATTLE STORIES • ROCKY LANE WESTERN • NYOKA THE JUNGLE GIRL • GABBY HAYES WESTERN
CAPT. MARVEL JR. • MASTER COMICS • TOM MIX WESTERN • MONTE HALE WESTERN • HOPALONG CASSIDY
ROD CAMERON WESTERN • SIX GUN HEROES • FAWCETT MOVIE COMIC • MIKE BARNETT, MAN AGAINST CRIME
MOTION PICTURE COMICS • TEX RITTER WESTERN • SOLDIER COMICS
WHOLESOME APPROVED READING ENTERTAINMENT
Every effort is made to insure that these comic magazines contain the highest quality of wholesome entertainment.
W. H. Fawcett, Jr. President

List of Fawcett Comics from *Captain Marvel Jr.* #110, June 1952. © 1952, Fawcett Publications.

Appendix C: The 1950s

The 1950s saw Fawcett enter the genres of horror; *(This Magazine is Haunted* #1, October 1951, *Worlds Beyond/Worlds of Fear* #1, January 1952, *Beware, Terror Tales* #1, May 1952, *Strange Suspense Stories* #1, June 1952), War; (*Soldier Comics* #1, January 1952, *Bill Battle* #1, October 1952, *Battle Stories* #1 , January 1952, science fiction; (*Captain Video* #1, February 1951, crime; *Mike Barnett, Man Against Crime* #1, December 1951, *Down with Crime* #1, November 1952, *Underworld Crime* #1, June 1952, *Suspense Detective*, June 1952).

Fawcett continued producing westerns in the early 1950s and added to their line *Rod Cameron Western* (February 1950), *Bill Boyd Western* (February 1950), *Ken Maynard Western* (September 1950), *Tex Ritter Western* (October 1950), *Bob Colt* (November 1950), *Bob Steele Western* (December 1950), *Andy Devine Western* (December 1950).

Likewise, Fawcett launched more short-lived romance titles including *I Love You* #1 (June 1950), *Love Mystery* #1 (June 1950), *Negro Romances* #1 (June 1950), *Girls in Love* #1(May 1950) and *Big Book Romances* #1 (1950).

Fawcett seems to have had some success with their movie adaptation comics. *Fawcett Movie Comics* lasted 11 issues (#7, 1950- #20 December 1952), and *Motion Picture Comics* (#101, 1950- #114 January 1953), and there were one-shot movie comics such as *Destination Moon* (1950), *Montana* (1950), and *Copper Canyon* (1950). There was a minor flurry of sports personality comics *such as Phil Rizzuto* (1951), *Larry Doby, Baseball Hero* (1950), *Joe Louis* (1950), *Eddie Stanky* (1951), *Don Newcombe* (1950) and *Baseball Heroes* (1952). Then there were oddball comics such as *Bob Swift, Boy Sportman* #1 (May 1951) and *Hot Rod Comics* #1 (1951).

By 1950 Fawcett had hit paydirt with their western and romance comics. The Captain Marvel family books were still selling well enough to continue but Fawcett's publishing forays into other publishing genres then popular were tepid at best (and largely unsuccessful).
By the time Fawcett ceased publishing their comics line in 1953, just the western and romance comics (besides Captain Marvel) were selling well. It's possible that the Fawcett executives saw that sales were trending down even on those comics and with the anti-comics climate then current, decided that publishing comics wasn't worth it. Once they had defaulted on the Superman/Captain Marvel lawsuit, they realized that comics publishing was no longer a profitable venture in the long run, and so decided to cut their loses, cease publishing and sell their remaining properties to other companies (such as Charlton).

In the January 1950 issue of *Capt. Marvel Jr* #81 the list of Fawcett published Comics included *Captain Marvel Adventures, Lash LaRue Western, The Marvel Family, Fawcett's Funny Animals, Whiz Comics, Western Hero, Rocky Lane Western, Nyoka The Jungle Girl, Gabby Hayes Western, Captain Marvel Jr., Master Comics, Tom Mix Western, Monte Hale Western,* and *Hopalong Cassidy.*

Three years later, in the January 1953, issue of *CMJ* #117 the list included *Captain Marvel Adventures, The Marvel Family, Lash LaRue Western, Fawcett's Funny Animals, Whiz Comics, Battle Stories, Rocky Lane Western, Nyoka The Jungle Girl, Gabby Hayes Western, Captain Marvel Jr., Master Comics, Tom Mix Western, Monte Hale Western, Hopalong Cassidy, Rod Cameron Western, Six Gun Heroes, Fawcett Movie Comic, Mike Barnett, Man Against Crime, Motion Picture Comics, Tex Ritter Western, Soldier Comics.* It is interesting to note that neither of these two lists contains the romance or horror comics Fawcett was publishing at the time.

Who Was Freddy Freeman?

"Crippled Freddy Freeman seemed more like Dicken's Tiny Tim character...or perhaps like Peter Pan when he flew about as Captain Marvel Jr." —C.C. Beck [1]

"Freddy Freeman was the last of a breed of characters that dated to the previous century...the orphan youngster with no friends or background who was forced to live on the streets and make a subsistence living anyway he could." —Robert Jennings[2]

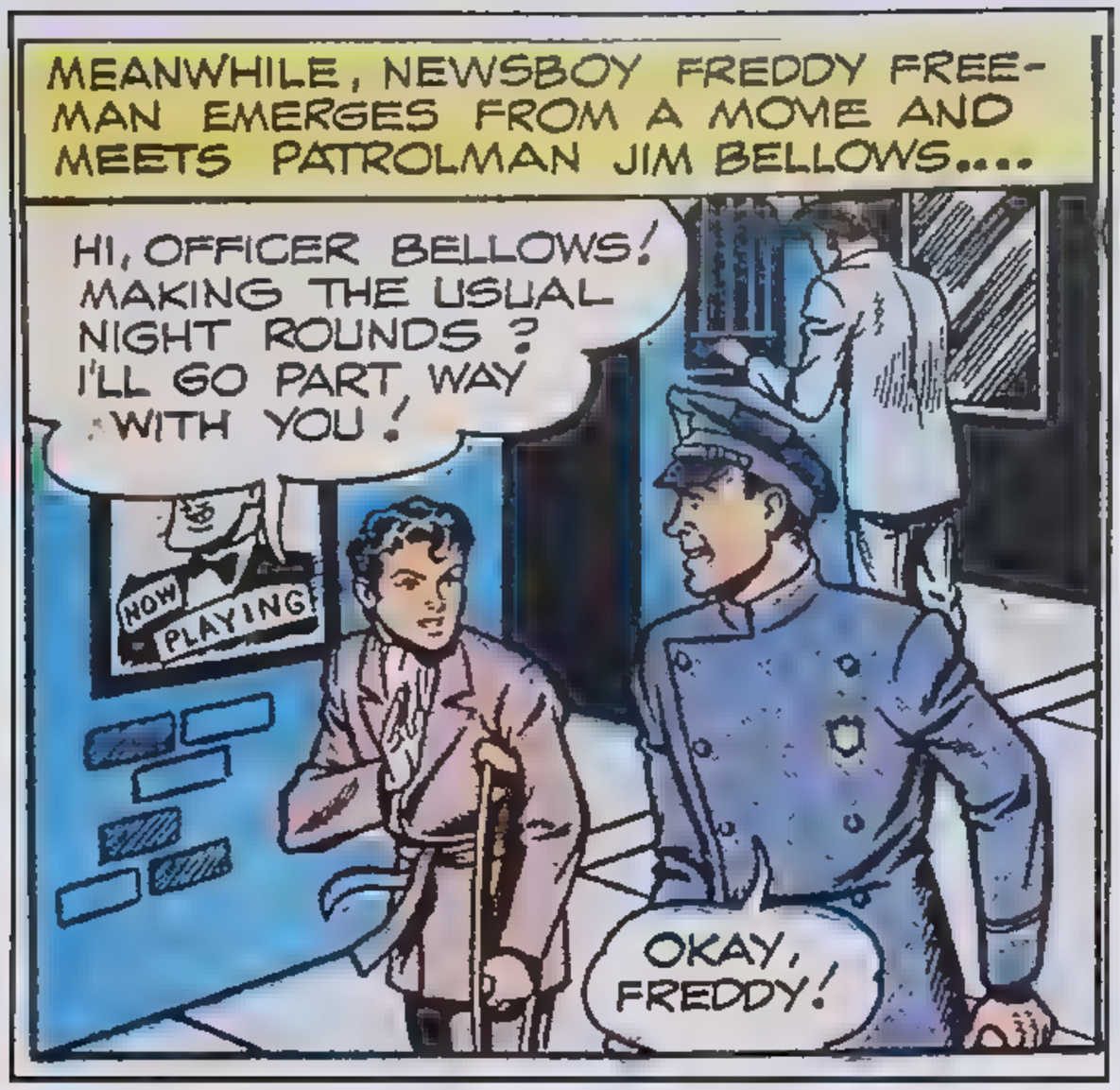
Freddy Freeman at home. *CMJ* #52-263. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1947, Fawcett Publications.

The Fawcett editors and writers revealed very little about Freddy Freeman's family background. In the first appearance of Captain Marvel Jr. (*WC* #25-1) we see Freddy fishing with his grandfather in a boat on "the bay." Freddy's grandfather hauls a battered Captain Nazi aboard the small craft, and for his kindness the super Aryan strikes the older man, sending him into the water never to be seen again.[3] Freddy's grandfather existed for a total of three panels of medium shots. Captain Nazi similarly slams the younger Freeman into the water, where he is rescued by Captain Marvel and taken first to a hospital and later to the old wizard, Shazam. From this point on, Freddy shares a twice over orphan status with Billy Batson. In a later issue, Freddy visits a young female friend, Lucy Meyer, (and her grandfather), in his old home town, a New England fishing village (in Maine), where he and Cap Jr. stop a Nazi arms stockpiling plot (*MC* #37-39).

Transported back, in time to New London, CT during the War for Independence, Freddy meets one of his ancestor, Nathaniel Freeman (*CMJ* #10-63). Toward the end of his Fawcett run, Freddy is transferred much further back to the time of King Richard I (*CMJ* #118-592), and meets Robin Hood and an even more distanct ancestor. This progenitor changes his name from John, the "bonds boy," to John "free man," thus originating Freddy's surname.
This is about all we are given regarding Freddy's background during the Fawcett era.

Character

Freddy was a very mature, responsible, and hard working teenager. He would go out of his way to help other people. While in most stories Freddy had his own newsstand, where he sold newspapers he did take on other jobs on a temporary basis such as being a farm laborer (*CMJ* #11-69), working on a fishing boat (*CMJ* #16-91), sports manager (*MF* #3-196), construction recruiter (*MC* #75-220), and being a cabin boy (*CMJ* #27-140). Without actually being one he was a boy scout, Freddy (and his alter ego) truly liked helping people. He was a hard worker, but could take time to relax. In most stories Freddy was fairly laid back, however, in some his alter ego developed a tendency to become a moralizing preacher. He took vacations (*MC* #76-225) and took time off. On occasion, Freddy defended himself using his crutch as a


MEANWHILE, NEWSBOY FREDDY FREEMAN EMERGES FROM A MOVIE AND MEETS PATROLMAN JIM BELLOWS....
HI, OFFICER BELLOWS! MAKING THE USUAL NIGHT ROUNDS? I'LL GO PART WAY WITH YOU!
NOW PLAYING
OKAY, FREDDY!

Freddy Freeman and his friend, Officer Bellows. *CMJ* #62-320. Art by Kurt Schaffenberger. © 1948, Fawcett Publications.

weapon (MC #27-7). Freddy was an intelligent boy but he could make mistakes. One day, at his newsstand, he finds a small boy who tells Freddy where he "run away from." The newsboy and Cap Jr. mistakenly returns the boy to his kidnappers. Freddy and Cap Jr. realize their blunder in not reading the newspaper front page headline trumpeting the boy's abduction (*CMJ* #49-247). Freddy's most frequent bone-headed mistake was changing from Captain Marvel Jr. to his vulnerable newsboy self and within a few panels being subdued (usually hit on the head) by the bad guys before he is able to shout, "Captain Marvel." This is an affliction he shared equally with his good friends Billy and Mary Batson. This, of course, was a formula plot device to allow some suspense to enter the stories.

For the first five years of his adventures, Freddy was a loner, with only a few friends who rarely appeared in the stories. Occasionally, boy-inventor, Sylvester Jones appeared in the stories, but his relationship to Freddy (and Cap Jr.) was always plot related. They were not necessarily hanging out together, nor enjoying a boyhood friendship. In 1947 Freddy became a renter at Mrs. Wagner's Boarding House (*CMJ* #52-260) where he is shown in conversation, having fellowship, eating meals and even playing checkers (*CMJ* #107-552) with his fellow boarders.

Freddy's Interests

The writers portrayed Freddy as a complex personality with a variety of interests. He goes to museums to view art (*MC* #40-55, *CMJ* #98-521), enjoys weekends at Mr. Botts' farm (*MF* #2-190), and country vacations especially on Farmer Jones' farm (*MC* #76-225, *MF* #28-347, *MC* #102-378, *MC* #112-434). The newsboy is a blood donor (*CMJ* #10-62) and active in his community (*CMJ* #46-226) as he once campaigned to raise funds for a new hospital. Freddy is an investor in the Cooperative Oil Company (*CMJ* #55-277). He attends auctions for exotic items like ancient Egyptian scrolls (*MF* #39-411). Freddy's alter ego is almost nominated to run for mayor (*CMJ* #67-349). He likes to go fishing in the country (*CMJ* #80-424, *MC* #121-506) and in the ocean (MC #86-282), and very late in the series we find his favorite sport is fishing (MC #132-588).

Freddy Freeman (and Cap Jr.) had pets such as monkeys (*CMJ* #36-74), ant bears (*CMJ* #33-164; *CMJ* #35-169), parrots (*CMJ* #113-571), cats (*CMJ* #91-483), and dogs (*CMJ* #95-502).

How Old Was Freddy Freeman?

Freddy is known as the first teen super hero. On researching these stories, this writer has operated on the premise that Freddy Freeman was probably 12 years old in 1942 (this means he was born in 1930). If this was the case, he attended junior high and senior high schools and graduated in 1948. It is possible for him to have stayed in a post-graduate trade school (or college) to 1950.

He would have been 22 in 1952, a year before his Fawcett adventures ended. Freddy/CapJr. seemed to age as time went on. In the 1950s, he was not the young lad he was in 1942.[6]

Time in the Fawcett Universe proceeded at the same pace as real time. During World War II, events in the real world parallel those in the Fawcett universe. The World's Most Powerful Boy routs an Japanese attack (*MC* #25-5) on Alaska in the spring of 1942. The Japanese did occupy the Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kista in early June 1942. U.S. and Canadian troops recaptured the islands during the summer of 1943. As the U.S. mobilizes and trained its armed forces, Freddy Freeman became a "camp newspaper boy" at Army Camp Urdell in mid-1942 (*MC* #30-10).

At the height of the 1942 German naval campaign in the Atlantic, The World's Most Powerful Boy destroyed a enemy battleship (*MC* #26-6) and captured an Nazi U-boat (MC #31-11). The sinking of the battleship Bismarck a year before was still a recent Allied victory. In late 1942, Cap Jr. halted a Capt. Nazi-led North African based bomber raid of South America

(*CMJ* #1-14). The Axis was still a threat in North Africa at that time, and remained so until May 1943.

In the spring of 1943, Cap Jr. stops a German sabotage plot near a small coastal Maine fishing village (*MC* #37-39). In reality, a year later, two Nazi spies arrived by U-Boat off the Maine coast with instructions to create terror in the U.S. They were William Curtis Colepaugh and Eric Gimpel. "CMJ Battles for Stalingrad" (*MC* #43-70), published in the fall of 1943, tells the story of the German/Soviet struggle for the great Russian industrial city in late 1942/early 1943. This story was obviously done after the event, but the battle was still a very fresh memory. In mid-1944 the Blue Boy of Power helps a team of America POWs (*CMJ* #21-117) beat their Japanese captors in the occupied Philippines. Cap Jr. defends US military bases in the Philippines (*CMJ* #31-156) from Japanese Robombs in mid-1945. The battle for the Philippines took place from late 1944 and lasted into the spring of 1945.

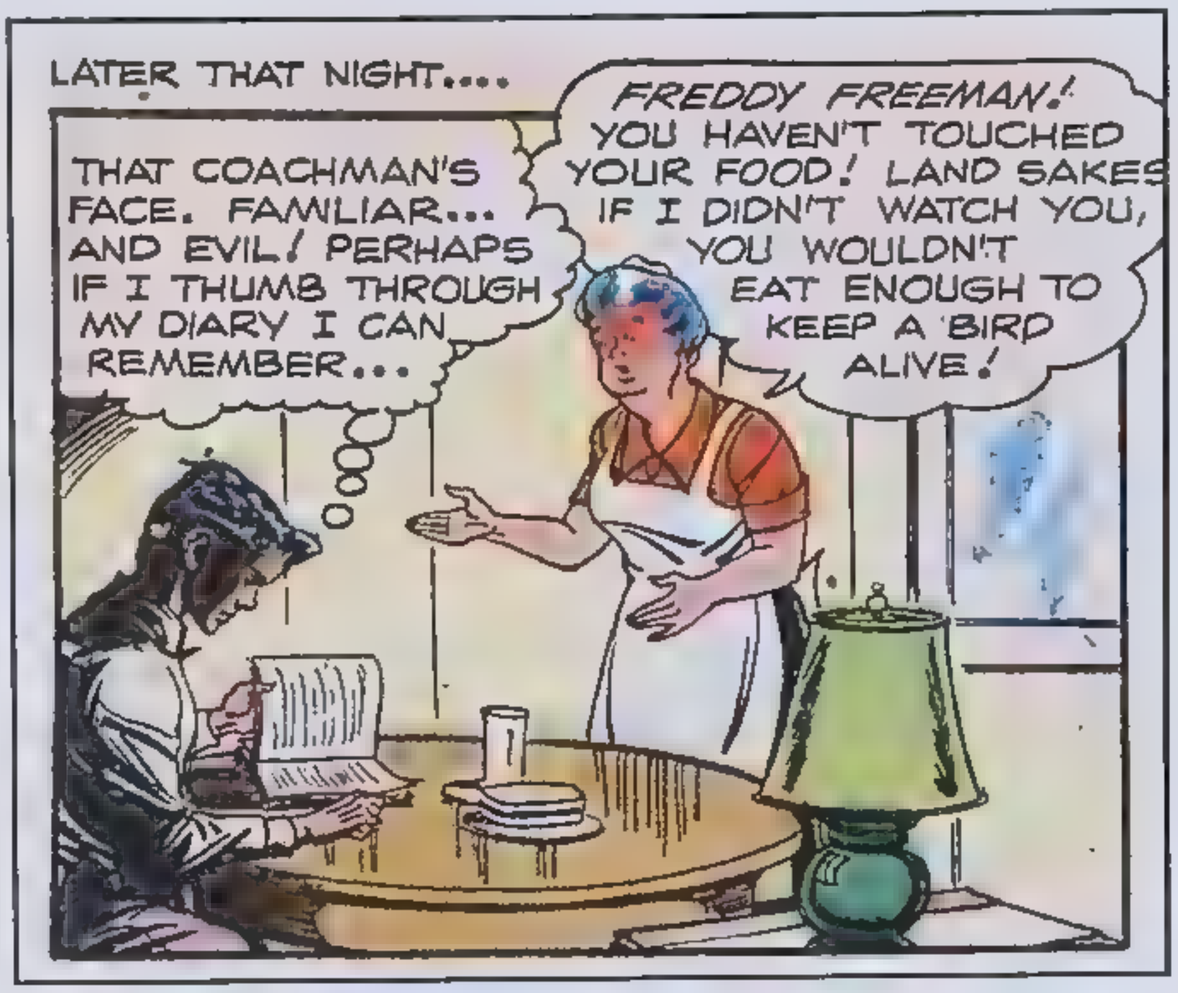
The villainous Greybeard was imprisoned in 1846 with a 99-year sentence. He is released after completing his sentence in an early 1946 story (*CMJ* #37-177).

Freddy visits a mysterious colonial age village *(CMJ* #60-310) where time proceeds at a different rate. The Blue Boy comments, "At that rate it will take thousands of years to reach 1948."

In a mid-1949 adventure (*CMJ* #77-407) Cap Jr. researches in a newspaper archive looking at newspapers from 1947. Freddy is shown driving a car in 1949 (*CMJ* #80-423), so he is at least 16 by then, and by this timeline 19 years old. In a time travel story (*CMJ* #81-430) the Blue Boy travels from 1949 to 1960 and returns. Cap Jr. helps the time traveling librarian Jeremy Thremm with his adventures (*CMJ* #83-442) and also returns to his origination year, 1949.

Cap Jr. has a 1950 European adventure (*CMJ* #85-454) where he helps a revolt against a latter day feudal lord similar to one that happened, 500 years earlier, in 1450. The World's Mightiest Boy travels 3000 years into the future to see if a time capsule buried in 1950 survived (*CMJ* #90-477). Professor Edgewise tells Freddy a story of a armed rebellion against the evil Baron De Moniac in 951 AD. The Baron is supposed to come back every 1000 years and does so in 1951 as the demon swordsman, John Masters. From his own time in 1951, Captain Marvel Jr. (*CMJ* #97-515) travels via the Rock of Eternity to the year 783,951 to help the last man on earth. Cap Jr. goes on a rescue mission to 4 million AD (*CMJ* #99-524) to find mountain engineer, John Goodmaker and return him to 1951.

In a late 1952 tale (*CMJ* #116-583), we see Freddy visiting a Washington D.C. night club, and in the same story, the beautiful villainess, Vampira, tries to seduce Cap Jr. This would seem to indicate Freddy was at least 21 at the time. There are several Korean War stories (*CMJ* #115-578; *MC* #132-588; *CMJ* #118-590; *CMJ* #119-594; *MF* #85-600) that are happening during the time of the Far East Asian conflict.


LATER THAT NIGHT....
THAT COACHMAN'S FACE. FAMILIAR... AND EVIL! PERHAPS IF I THUMB THROUGH MY DIARY I CAN REMEMBER...
FREDDY FREEMAN! YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED YOUR FOOD! LAND SAKES IF I DIDN'T WATCH YOU, YOU WOULDN'T EAT ENOUGH TO KEEP A BIRD ALIVE!

Freddy Freeman and his Landlady, Mrs Wagner. *CMJ* #62-320. Art by Joe Certa. © 1948, Fawcett Publications.

In summary, both Freddy and Cap Jr. lived in real time and seemed to grow and age as time passed. He was not the same boy in 1953 that he was in 1942.

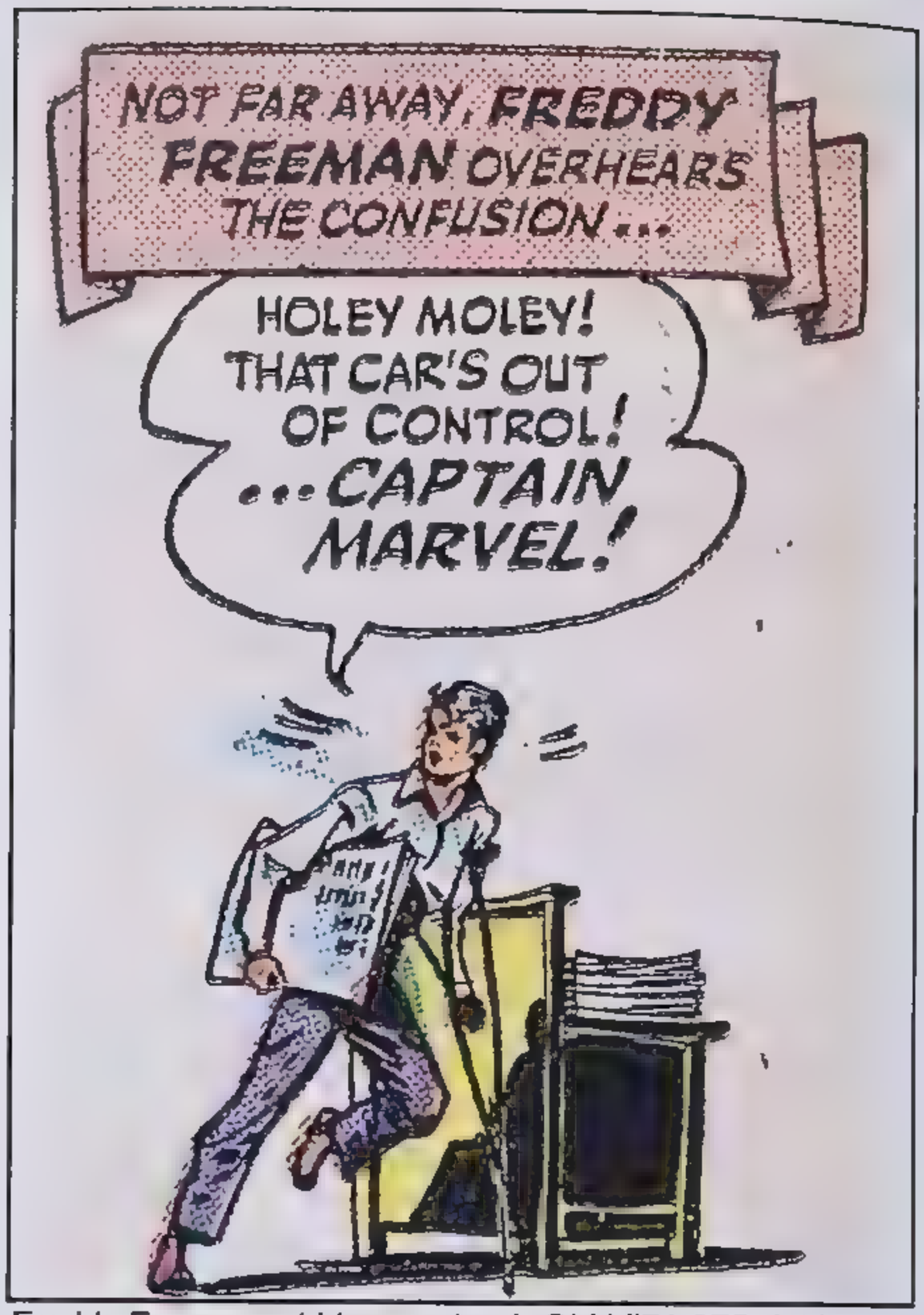
Freddy the Newsboy

Freddy Freeman's status as a newsboy was established early on when he asks a newsstand dealer for a job (*MC* #23-3). The older man consents, which leads to a confrontation with Captain Nazi. Freddy later gets his own newsstand and also has a newspaper delivery route. In the early stories, he seems to be an independent business operator who sells a variety of newspapers.

During the war years we see Freddy plying his newspaper trade in New York City (*AHC* #1-34; *MC* #41-60; *MC* #42-65; *CMJ* #12-72; *CMJ* #12-74; *MC* #44-75; *CMJ* #20-111) and Washington, DC (*MC* #63-159). He also sells newspapers on Army bases (*MC* #30-10).

Freddy's newsstand moved around during and especially toward the end of World War II. The crippled newsboy is hawking his papers near the Bigwing Bomber Plant in 1943 (*CMJ* #11-68). Freddy sells newspapers on the waterfront before a return battle with Dr. Sivana (*CMJ* #13-78). He is in front of the Evening Star newspaper building (*CMJ* #32-160) in late 1945. Freddy roved as he sold his newspapers - he was in front of the Rye Exchange Bank (*CMJ* #32-161) just before an armed robbery. He temporarily turned over his business to another boy moved to Arizona, and set up another newsstand in the ghost infested town of Buzzardville (*CMJ* #38-184). By late 1946 he has moved his newsstand to in front of the Sub-Treasury Building (*CMJ* #44-216).

Several of Cap Jr's stories revolved around his relationships with other newsboys. Freddy wins a newsboys' association contest by selling lots of newspapers winning a prize trip to the Canadian North Woods (*CMJ* #29-149). He does social events like going to the circus with other newsboys (*MC* #70-191). Freddy was involved in an initiation rite in a graveyard in order to join a Newsboys' Club (*CMJ* #40-195). Freddy is later the president of the Newsboy Club when he teaches the spoiled rich boy, Gilbert Tisdale, how to become more responsible (*CMJ* #48-239). Freddy and his alter ego resist the bullying of an older boy named Cliff when The World's Mightiest Boy a saves younger boy Mickey, from getting hit by a train. Cliff uses his own alter ego, "The Black Shroud" (MC #79-243), to disrupt a newspaper boy picnic, but ends up getting rescued by Cap Jr. from one of his own lethal traps.



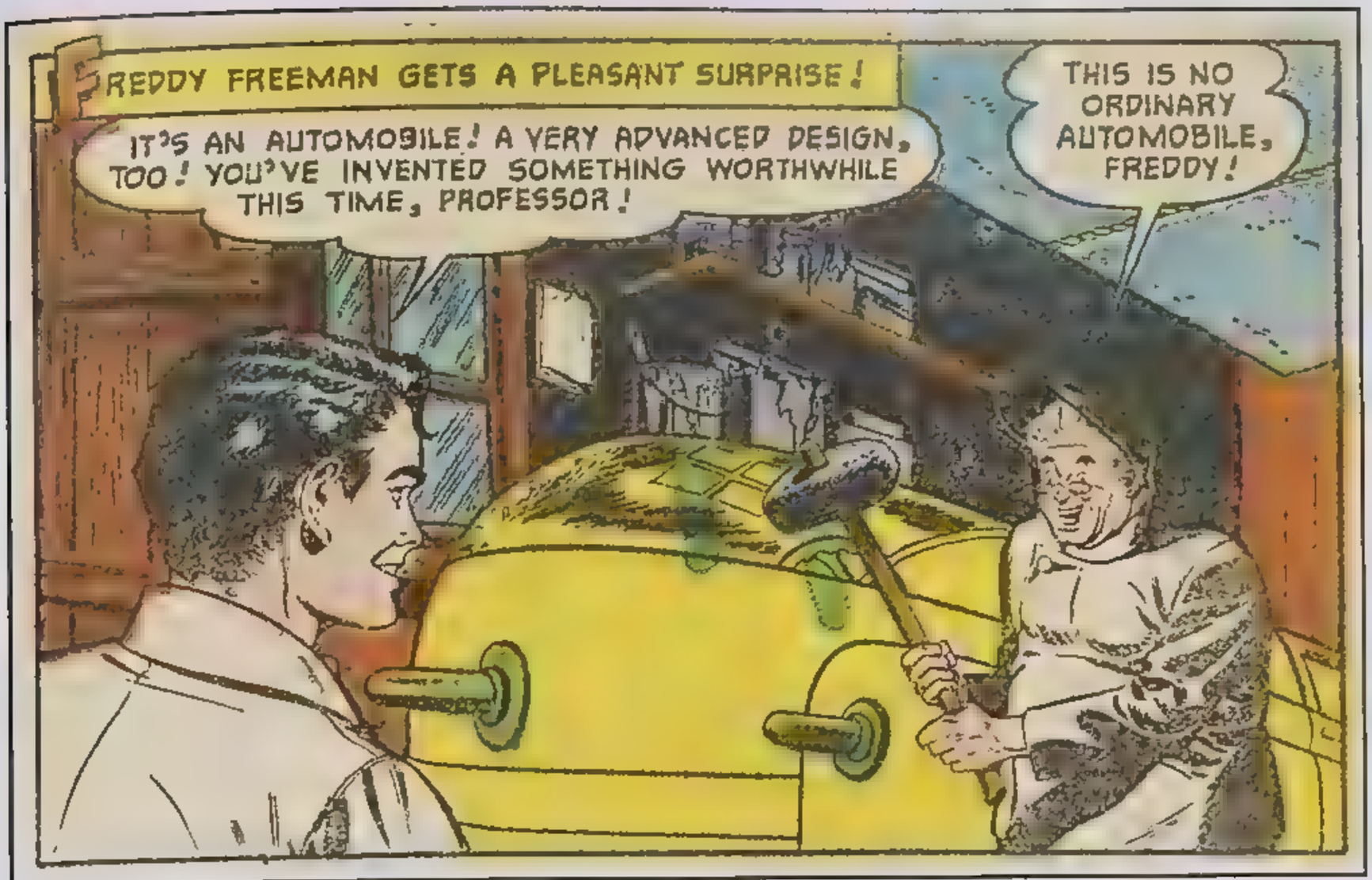
Freddy Freeman at his newstand. *CMJ* #71-375. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

Freddy attends an annual newsboy luncheon with his young colleagues where he is still acknowledged as president of the Newsboy Club (*CMJ* #62-322). The crippled newsboy was present at meetings in the circulation department of the Evening Star with other newsboys (*MF* #41-421).

Later in his career, he is working exclusively with the Daily Gazette/Evening Star newspapers ("his employer"). The Evening Star Building is shown in the fall of 1945 (*CMJ* #32-160). This story also shows Freddy hawking the newspaper. In the spring of 1947 (*CMJ #48-239*), a Daily Gazette truck delivers newspapers to Freddy at his newsstand. The first actual visual of copy of the newspaper takes place in the next issue (*CMJ #49-247*). Freddy catches a ride home on an Evening Star newspaper truck two issues later (*CMJ #51-257*). In the late summer of 1947, Freddy visits his boss, the Circulation Manager of the Daily Gazette/Evening Star (*CMJ* #52-260). This indicates the two newspapers have merged--one being a morning and the other an evening edition. J. W. Crowberson tells the boy that he is being transferred to a new newsstand located on the other side of town. After this Freddy

AT THE ANNUAL NEWSBOYS' LUNCHEON---
O.K., FELLOWS! LET'S GO IN! LUNCH IS READY!
GOSH, FREDDY, IT SURE IS NICE OF MR. TAYLOR TO THROW THIS BIG LUNCHEON FOR US NEWSIES EVERY YEAR!
DINING ROOM

Freddy Freeman and the News Boy Club. *CMJ* #62-322. Art by Charles Tomsey. ©1948, Fawcett Publications.


FREDDY FREEMAN GETS A PLEASANT SURPRISE!
IT'S AN AUTOMOBILE! A VERY ADVANCED DESIGN, TOO! YOU'VE INVENTED SOMETHING WORTHWHILE THIS TIME, PROFESSOR!
THIS IS NO ORDINARY AUTOMOBILE, FREDDY!

Freddy Freeman and Professor Edgewise. *CMJ* #98-518. Art by Joe Certa. © 1951, Fawcett Publications.

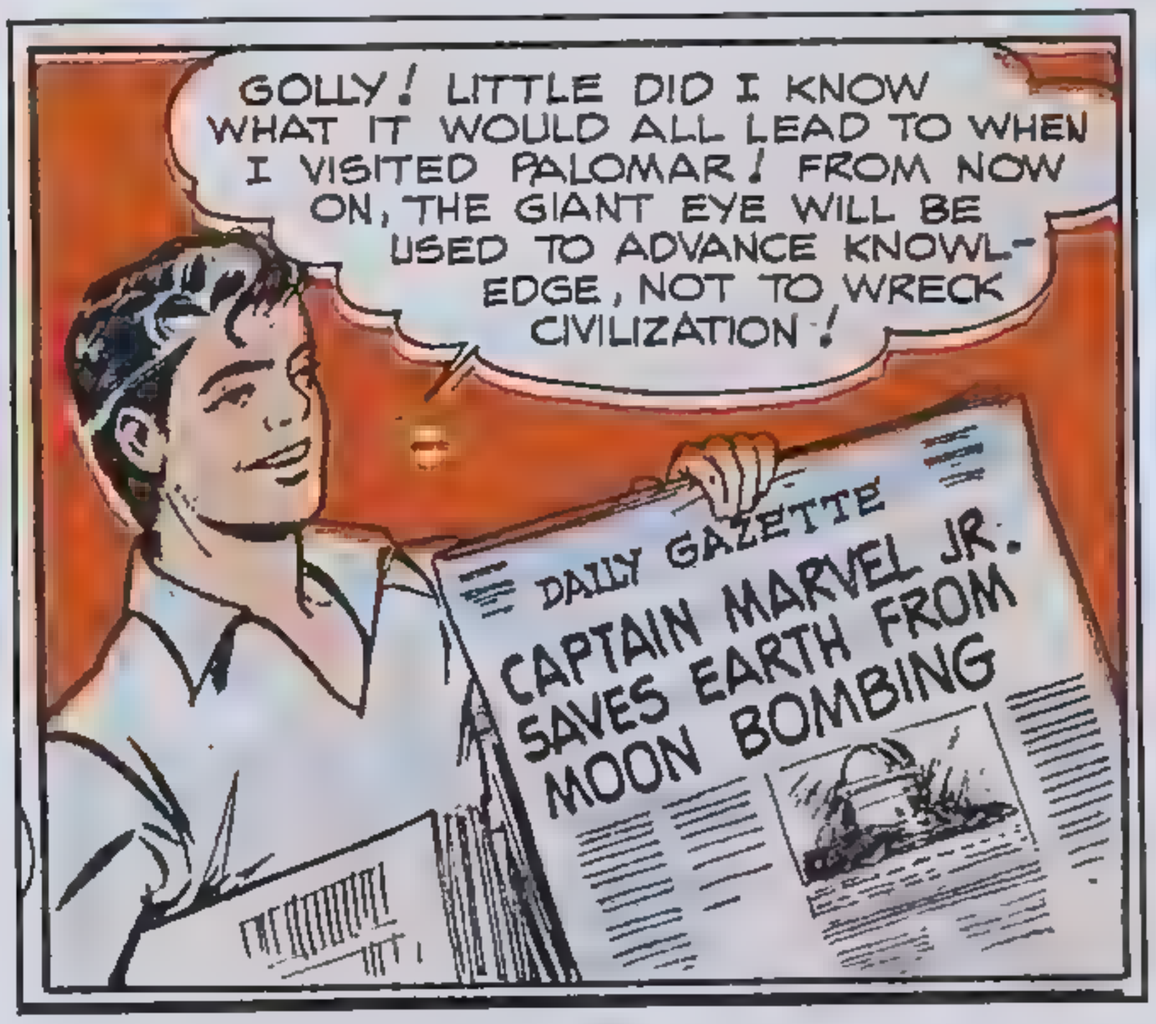
sells the Daily Gazette and the Evening Star almost exclusively. In the last issue of the Cap Jr. title, Freddy is still selling the Daily Gazette (*CMJ* #119-594) and the Evening Star (*CMJ* #119-596).

Some of the Captain Marvel Jr. stories revolved around newspapers or newspaper production. Freddy and his blue clad alter ego have several adventures with the notoriously lazy reporter "Lightning" Larry Davis (*CMJ* #21-118; *CMJ* #22-122; *CMJ* #39-188; *MF* #5-208; *CMJ* #45-222). Editor Scrubb of the Scimitar newspaper has poison ink applied to the printing presses of his rival, Mr. White's, paper, the Blade (*CMJ* #13-79). When people touch copies of the infected Blade they die until it is discovered and stopped by CapJr. This plot is recycled three years later. This time a radioactive substance is mixed into the ink which causes anemia and blindness (*CMJ* #44-218). Freddy is roughed up at his newsstand by thugs send by rival newspaper publisher J.B. Ridgeway of the Daily Chronicle (*CMJ* #40-194). Editor Oaks of the Daily Record goes with Freddy to confront Ridgeway. Later Freddy and Oaks are abducted by Ridgeway and dumped into a quicksand swamp. Freddy calls on CMJ, who saves Oakes and captures the villainous publisher.

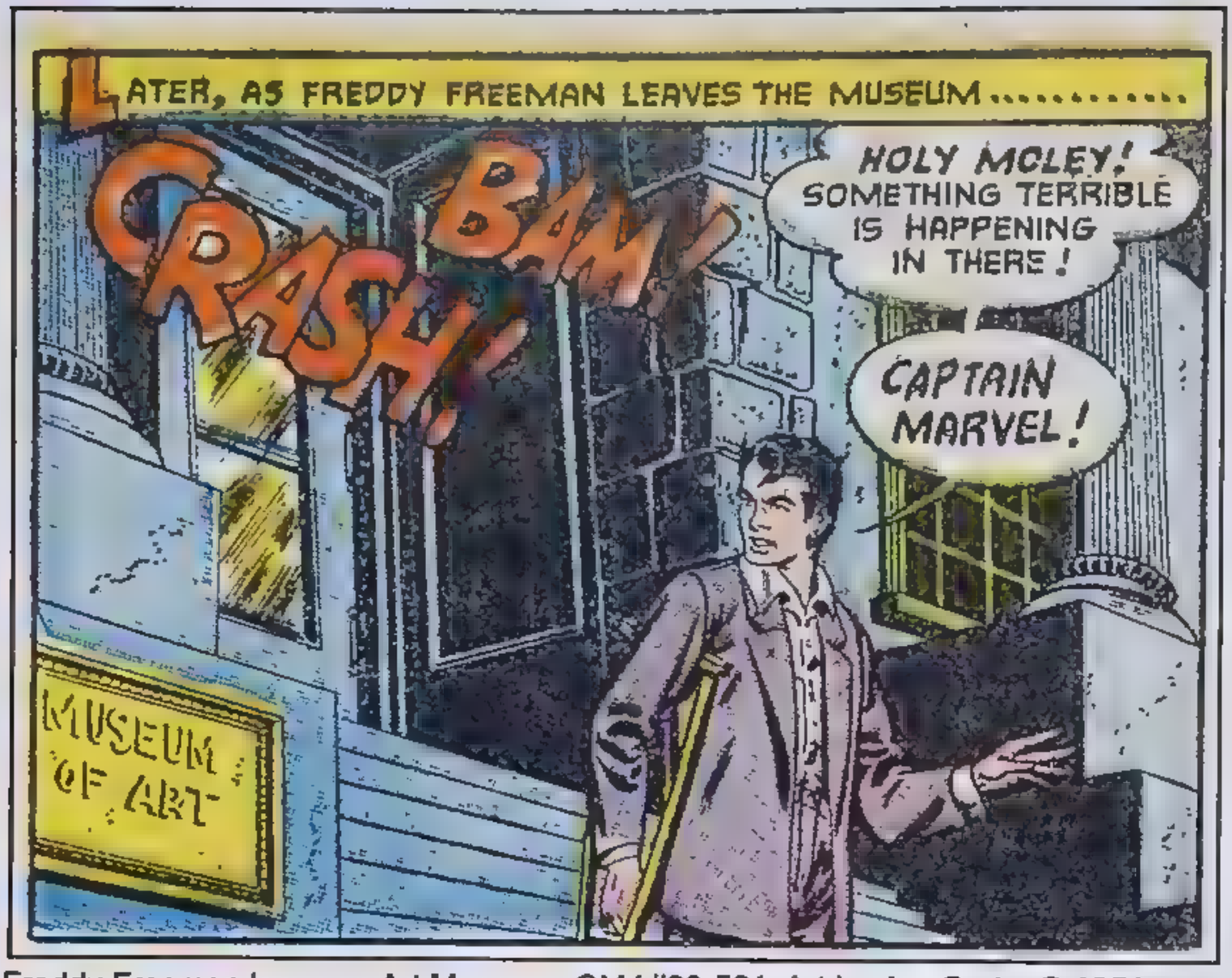
Freddy and the publisher of the Evening Star exchange jobs in "Headline Headaches" (*CMJ* #59-301). Freddy is kidnapped and dragged from his newsstand and beaten because the Evening Star is editorializing against mayoral candidate Blackheart (*CMJ* #66-343). Freddy is attacked at his newsstand by a thug from a rival newspaper, the Daily Scandal, in "The Newspaper War" (*MF* #41-421). Paxton T. Crumpet, the publisher of the Daily Gazette/Evening Star, was involved in several of the Captain Marvel Jr. stories (*CMJ* #59-301; *CMJ* #66-343; *CMJ* #73-#387; *MF* #27-#341; *CMJ* #75-397).

Freddy's newsstand is the place where many of his adventures start or where significant action takes place. Freddy discovers "little people" or trolls looking for money near his newsstand (*CMJ* #5-37). One night while closing his newsstand Freddy listens to a nefarious conversation between musician Alphonse Tweeter and a crook named Phade which leads to adventure with…jitterbugging ghosts and demons…"(*CMJ* #7-48).

As mentioned above, the pivotal story where Freddy finds a new home in Mrs Wagner's Boarding House (*CMJ* #52-260) was started when W. Crowberson, the circulation manager of the Daily Gazette and Evening Star, ordered the newsboy to a new location for his newsstand "on the other side of town." W. Crowberson is a portmanteau of Will Lieberson and Wendell Crowley, Fawcett editors.


GOLLY! LITTLE DID I KNOW WHAT IT WOULD ALL LEAD TO WHEN I VISITED PALOMAR! FROM NOW ON, THE GIANT EYE WILL BE USED TO ADVANCE KNOWL-EDGE, NOT TO WRECK CIVILIZATION!
DAILY GAZETTE
CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. SAVES EARTH FROM MOON BOMBING

Freddy Freeman at his newstand. *CMJ* #71-373. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.



Freddy Freeman leave an Art Museum. *CMJ* #98-521. Art by Joe Certa. © 1951, Fawcett Publications.

School Days

Well-known 1960s-1970s fan comics historian Robert Jennings noted of Freddy Freeman, "...I don't recall him ever having to attend school."[7] Compared to teenage comics such as Archie, where many of the stories revolved around school-related situations, Jennings' lack of memory seems understandable. While not many of Freddy/Cap Jr's adventures took place in a school context, they did happen.

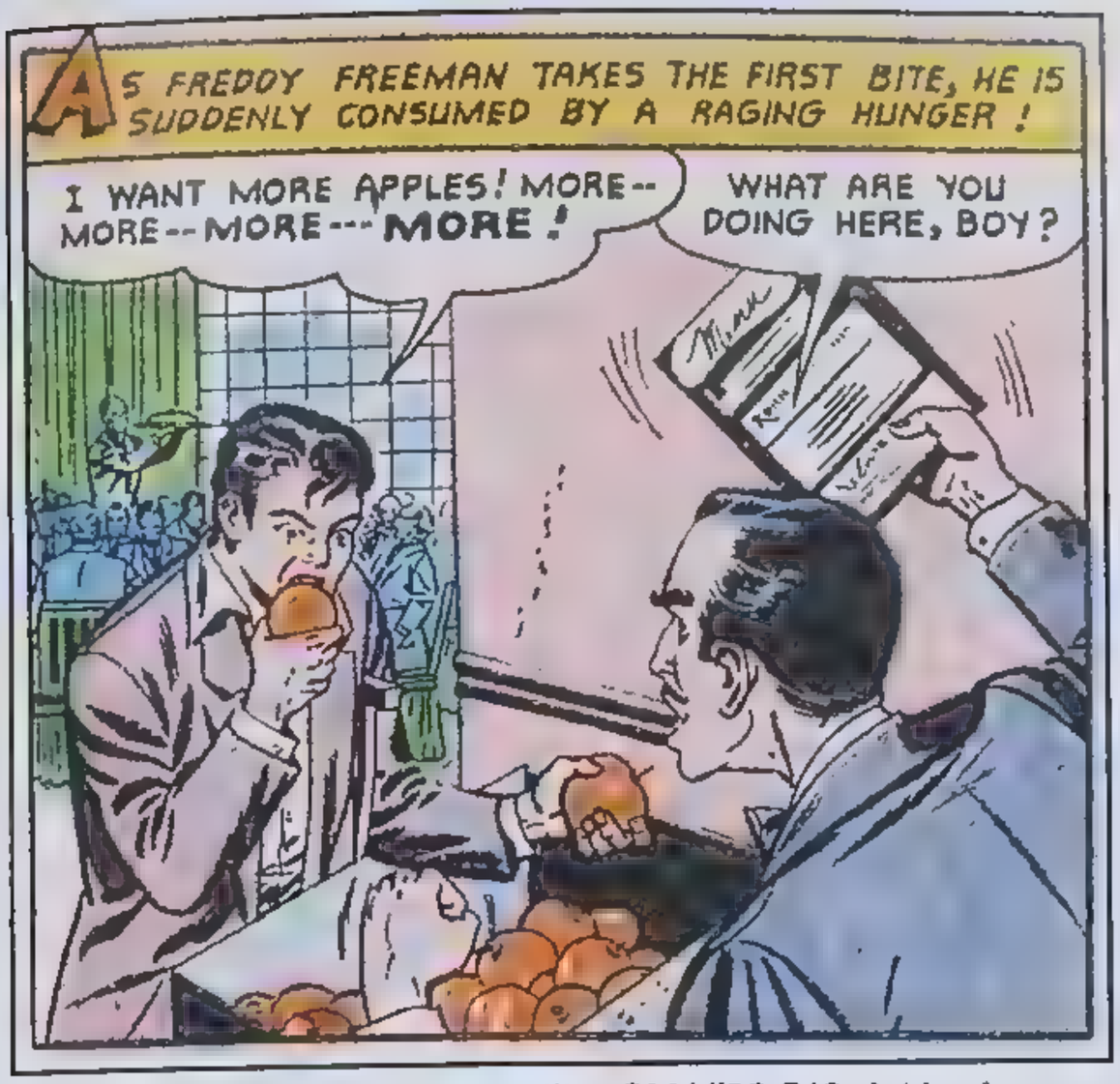
Freddy Freeman was temporarily adopted in 1943 by Mr. and Mrs. Pierpoint Snodgrass (*CMJ* #13-76), who send the newsboy to the exclusive Oxbow Academy, a high-class private school. There he meets fellow students Tom Taylor and Trudy Lane, and has a series of adventures related to school dances and football. This situation lasts only until the end of the 12-page story. Freddy is a member of a school class (mid-1944) that goes on a field trip to visit the "Lane of the Great" in the nearby park (*MC* #51- 110). In another 1944 story Freddy helps fellow student Willie Washout gain confidence in himself (*CMJ* #22-121). Freddy Freeman and Sylvester Jones are classmates at General High, where they help teacher Miss Duncan as she coaches the school football team (*CMJ* #26-137). In the next issue (*CMJ* #27-141) Freddy is attending City High where he helps basketball player Tim Tweed.

In the spring of 1946 (*MC* #69-186), Freddy mentioned that a Professor Greene is "an old biology teacher of mine." In the fall of 1948 (*MC* #97-348), Freddy seems to have graduated and, while delivering newspapers sees a teacher fall out of a school building window. Cap Jr. rescues the instructor and returns her to the classroom. However, in late 1948, Freddy is back in the classroom (*CMJ* #69-362) where he tries to help, unsuccessfully, the crook Dummer get an education. In a return engagement with the mentally unstable Acrobat *(MC #112-434)*, Freddy is "to pretend he's writing an article about the circus for his high school newspaper." Freddy Freeman is involved in a community play (in a public school building) acting as himself where he confronts the real life Sivana Jr. in the late winter or early spring of 1950 (*MC*#114-444). While this story takes place in a public school building, it doesn't necessarily follow that Freddy was a current student there at the time of the story. About the same time, Freddy (and Cap Jr.) help his geeky high school classmate, Egbert Pinch, in a decathlon sports event (*CMJ #85-452*). We do see Billy Batson, Mary Batson and Freddy Freeman in the same school class in The Marvel Family story, "The Theft of Speech" (*The Marvel Family* #50, August 1950). While this is not clearly stated, this may be a college class (or seminar) the Marvel trio were attending, as the instructor was Professor Gilbert Thorne, teacher of languages.

Resolving Problems

With the premise that time moves at the same rate on Fawcett Earth as it does in our reality, and that Freddy graduated high school (this was never shown) in 1948, what do we make of these stories having the newsboy in school after he graduated? Several possibilities come to mind as solutions.

First, the writers and editors weren't that concerned about strict chronology/continuity but more about what made a good story. Second, there may have been reasons for Freddy's involvement with school beyond high school. Freddy's 1950 adventure with Egbert Pinch may have taken place while Freddy was a student of a trade or technical school in the years 1949-50, directly after his graduation. Technical schools used often high school facilities (in the evenings or weekends) for their courses. So Freddy, as a recent graduate and still being a post graduate student using the same facilities, could have been Egbert's classmate. Also, he might still be writing


AS FREDDY FREEMAN TAKES THE FIRST BITE, HE IS SUDDENLY CONSUMED BY A RAGING HUNGER !
I WANT MORE APPLES! MORE-- MORE--MORE---MORE !
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, BOY?

Freddy Freeman's strange appetite. *CMJ* #98-519. Art by Joe Certa. © 1951, Fawcett Publications.

for the high school newspaper even after graduating.

Third, the school stories that took place after 1948 may have been tales of Freddy's school days published well after they occurred. While there is no indication of this in the actual stories it is possible. For example, the 1946 story "A Monument of Peace" (*CMJ #36-173*), appears with espionage themes and probable Nazi spies many months after the war with Germany was over. Apparently this was a inventory story that the editors decided to run even though it is chronologically out of place. The above-mentioned Stalingrad story is also an example of this.[8]

This seems to be about the extent of Freddy Freeman's school involvement. By the middle of 1950 any references to Freddy's attending school end. Many of these post-1950 stories revolved around events at Mrs Wagner's Boarding House. Actually, there were only a handful of school-related stories were produced out of hundreds of Cap Jr. tales.

Freddy and Girls

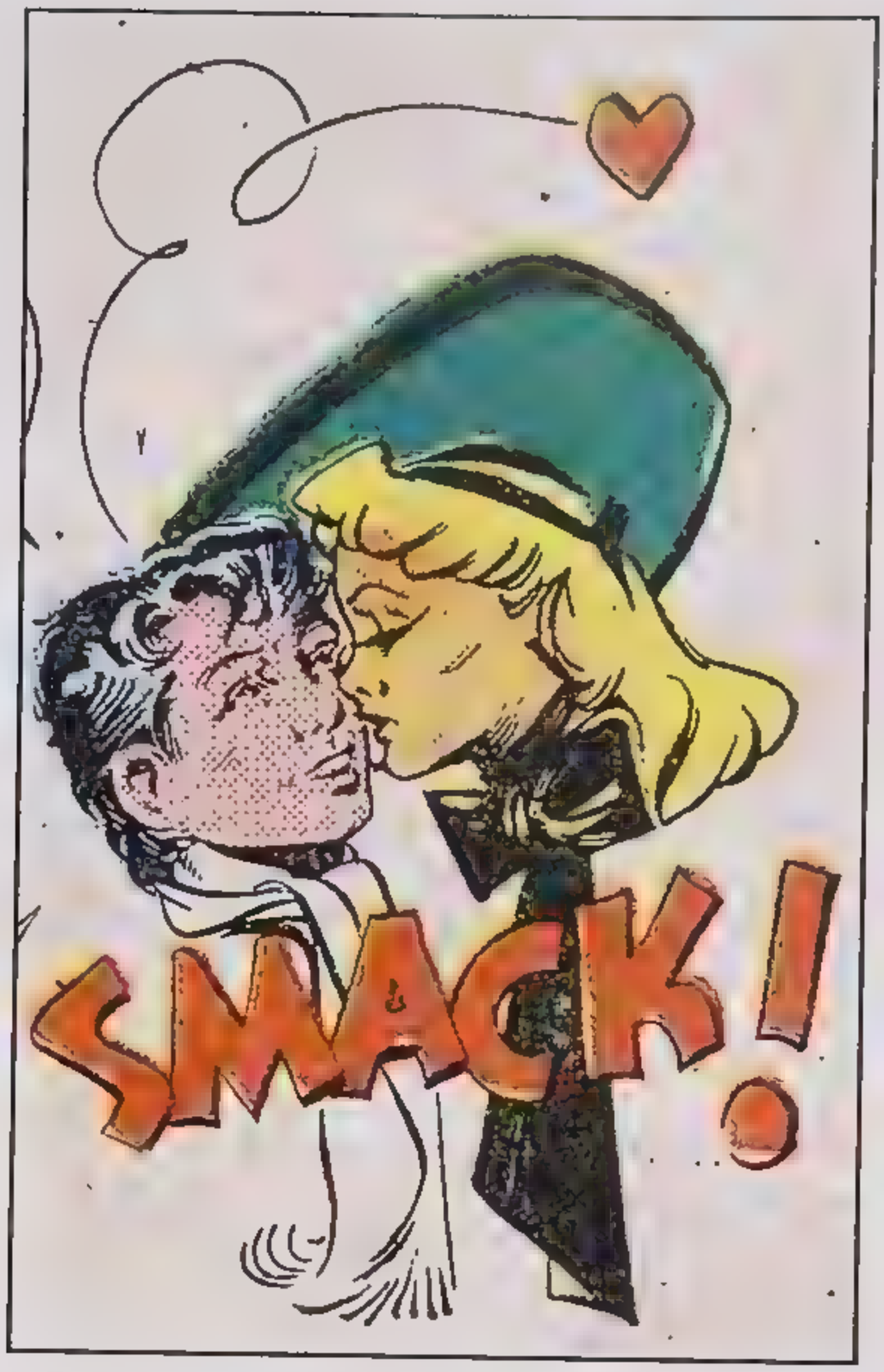
Surprisingly, for a teenager, Freddy Freeman had few stories where he became entangled in adolescent romances. As mentioned previously, he visited young Lucy Meyer, a friend in his old home town (*MC* #37-39). The relationship between Freddy and Lucy seems to consist more of an older brother-younger sister dynamic than any romance. Freddy's first real brush with romance happened to him on a trip to Mexico (*CMJ* #24-129). He helps a pretty young girl win money to help her brother get a needed operation. At the end Cap Jr. turns to leave and the girl asks, "You're not leaving for good? I...I...will see you again?" The World's Mightiest Boy responds, "I hope so, goodbye!" Later Freddy deliberates, "She really likes me. Anyway, as Captain Marvel, Jr." With a resigned smile he continues, "But as plain Freddy Freeman, I don't have much glamor. Not enough for a girl matador. Sigh...but she certainly was pretty!"

Freddy (and Cap Jr.) were capable of being infatuated with older women, as shown in the delightful 1946 tale about Lona Twister, a beautiful movie star, trying to revive her flagging career (CMJ #37-176). Freddy, with the help of the Blue Boy, rescues Babs Randall, "the Richest Girl in the World", from the evil machinations of her scheming cousin Malcolm (MC #78-237). Babs invites Freddy to a carnival where Malcolm tries to use a roller coaster to kill her. Freddy's relationship to Babs seems similar to that of Lucy Meyer--a big brother looking after a younger sister, though Freddy definitely likes this "younger sister."

Mrs Wagner's niece, Betty visits and is teamed up with Freddy for a scavenger hunt. Freddy is attracted to Betty but Cap Jr. becomes a rival for the girl's affections (*CMJ* #55-278). However, all turns out well when the Blue Boy turns Betty off by feigning arrogance after rescuing the girl. Freddy thinks, "Good old Captain Marvel, Jr! He deliberately acted conceited so that Betty would dislike him, and turn to me!" Freddy and Betty return to the boarding house where they win the scavenger hunt. Freddy is at the train station when Betty departs. "Visit us again some time, Betty!" The young girl responds, "I sure will, Freddy!" The last panel shows Freddy, at his newsstand, daydreaming of Betty. As far as the readers of *Captain Marvel Jr.* were concerned there were no return visits. Freddy later returns the favor by helping out the bewildered Blue Boy from an enamoured princess who wants to marry Cap Jr. (CMJ #64-334).

In a mid-1949 story (*CMJ* #74-392), Freddy daydreams of himself surrounded by several pretty young women on a beach in the sunny south (perhaps California or Hawaii). Also, as mentioned previously, Cap Jr. was mature enough in 1952 to merit the amorous attentions of the villainous Vampira (*CMJ* #116-583). It is interesting how few stories about a teen and later early 20s super hero revolve around romance. The easy answer is the young boy readership for the title.

Sometimes Freddy and Cap Jr. help to facilitate romances with others. In an Otto Binder-written tale (*CMJ* #38-181) they assist the young Arab Ali in winning the hand of the



Freddy Freeman and Lona Twister. *CMJ* #37-176. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1946, Fawcett Publications.

Sultan's beautiful daughter, Fatima. While in the "Lost Forest", the World's Mightiest Boy helps bring together Hank Petrie, a naturalist, and Bubbles Blake, a pretty heiress. They fall in love, and Clem Whittacker[9], a justice of the peace who is also in the "Lost Forest," marries them (*CMJ* #48-238). Cap Jr. helps Jerry Lifejoy, a would-be merman, see how beautiful his normal human secretary is (after being distracted by mermaids), and he proposes marriage (*CMJ* #54-274). She accepts and the Blue Boy discreetly exits the scene.

Home Sweet Home

During the first almost six years of the strip Freddy is shown as a loner with his own "apartment". His first abode was an "out-of-the-way shack" shown in early 1942 (*MC* #24-4). In late 1942 Freddy has a "small room hidden somewhere in the midst of the vast metropolis…." (*CMJ #1-15*). In early 1943 Freddy looks out the window of "his lonely lodgings" at the events of a nearby airport (*CMJ* #5-35). A postman has to ask directions "in the poorest part of town" to find Freddy's "miserable home" or "garret" to deliver a letter (*MC* #37-39). We later see Freddy being awakened in his apartment by a "thunderous crash" against a nearby bank building wall (*CMJ* #11-73). We are given the newsboy's 1946 home address: 85 Center St. (*CMJ* #40-192). In a special Christmas story we get a glance of a very poor Freddy Freeman in his humble room. He is a pitiful yet thankful figure who needs to be needed (*CMJ* #46-229). He was destined for better times. Freddy gave up "the room I'm renting" in the summer of 1947 when he found "a real home" at Mrs Wagner's Boarding House (*CMJ* #52-260). He would be a member of the Boarding House until the end of the series and beyond.[10] Perhaps the Fawcett editors and writers wanted to signal that the Great Depression and World War II were over and that better times were coming for the American people and Freddy Freeman.

Conclusion

In this brief survey of Freddy Freeman, the alter ego of Captain Marvel Jr., we have explored several facets of his life. We have endeavored to understand his character, his interests, his age and how he aged, his time in school, his job as a newsboy, his relationship with other newsboys, his relationships with members of the opposite sex and where he lived. Taking the entirety of his life as portrayed during the stories published from 1941-1953, we see that the writers and editors were concerned about developing Freddy Freeman as a real, approachable, and decent person in his own right, and not just as the non-super powered counterpart to the World's Most Powerful Boy.[11]

Endnotes

[1] P.C. Hamerlinck (Ed), *The Fawcett Companion: The Best of FCA*, 2001, p. 29

[2] Robert Jennings, *The Comic World*, #20, February 1979, p. 52

[3.] A short version of this the origin was repeated almost a year later (*CMJ* #1-13)

[4.] Almost 40 years later, E. Nelson Bridwell invented the idea that Quality Comics' Kid Eternity was Freddy Freeman's long lost brother (*World's Finest Comics* #268, May 1981).

[5.] P.C. Hamerlinck writes Freddy was "...a 14-year-old orphan.." (*The Shazam Family* Vol. 1, Forward, p. 6). This is also confirmed by the Fawcett Writing Rules (*Fawcett Companion*, p. 25). "Freddy Freeman is a crippled boy *about* 14 years of age." (italic added)

[6.] Captain Marvel Jr. visited his future self "Fred" Freeman in 2044 (*CMJ* #17-96). Fred is an old man but still vigorous. Fred would be 114 years old at that time.

[7.] Robert Jennings, *The Comics World* #20, February 1979, p. 52.

[8.] *Wow Comics* #42, April 1946, published "Official War Archive" stories of Phantom Eagle and Commando Yank (Two stories for each character). This also was many months after the war was over.

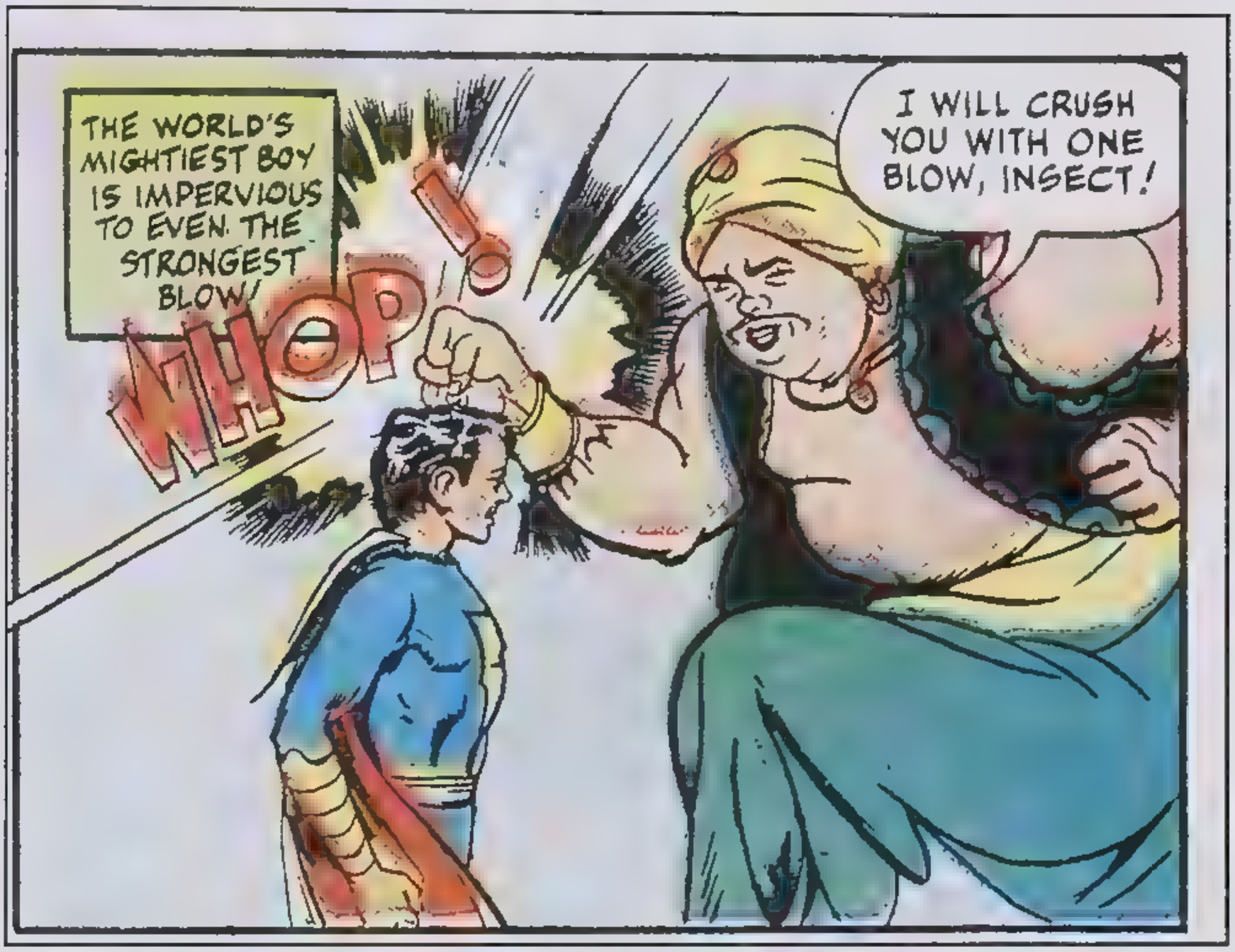
[9] Similar to Clem Weisbecker, Fawcett comics artist.

[10.] The last Marvel Family story ("Then there Were None") took place partly at Mrs Wagner's Boarding House. *The Marvel Family* #89, January 1954.

[11.] For more on Freddy Freeman see D. Ensign, *Alter Ego* 3:19, December 2002, 51-52.

The Travels of Freddy Freeman

This survey article provides a brief rundown on the many places visited by Freddy Freeman and his blue-clad alter ego.



Cap Jr. battles a genie in Arabia. *CMJ* #38-181. Art by Bud Thompson. ©1946, Fawcett

Freddy Freeman, See the USA

During the mid-1940s Fawcett produced a series of Captain Marvel stories where the Big Red Cheese traveled to specific U.S. cities where he met local celebrities and magazine distributors, visited landmarks and had adventures. These were published in *Captain Marvel Adventures* #25-44, 54-57, 67-69.[1] While the World's Mightiest Boy did not have the specific itinerary that the World's Mightiest Mortal had, he did get around.

In the early years of the 1940s, Freddy did a lot of traveling both in and out of the country. As Cap Jr. he stopped a Japanese attack in Alaska (*MC* #25-5). The Blue Boy flew to the "North Country" (probably Minnesota) to battle Paul Bunyan (*CMJ* #3-27). In early 1943 he traveled to the West Coast (*CMJ* #4-31), where his alter ego battled Captain Nippon. Captain Marvel Jr. aids Russian troops at a North Pole station (*CMJ* #5-35) against attacks by Captain Nazi. In the same issue (*CMJ* #5-38), the newsboy journeys to Florida where he matches wits with Dr. Sivana who is trying to cash in on the "fountain of youth" legend of Ponce De Leon. Freddy returns to his roots (*MC* #37-39) when he visits a New England fishing village where he and Cap Jr. destroy, a secret arms supply built by German enemy agents. Several months later Freddy travels back in time to battle another of Dr. Sivana's schemes and meets his Revolutionary War ancestor, Nathaniel Freeman, in New London, Connecticut (*CMJ* #10-63). Freddy, as the World's Mightiest Boy, travels to Hollywood (*CMJ* #15-87) to make about movie on Captain Marvel Jr. In early 1944 Freddy goes to the Pacific Northwest (perhaps Seattle) to take a job on a fishing boat (*CMJ* #16-91), where he and the Blue Boy thwart a wicked Japanese plot to poison Americans with contaminated fish. Freddy also goes out west where he helps another young crippled boy overcome his handicap (*CMJ* #17-98). Cap Jr. is stranded with several Hollywood celebrities in a remote canyon in the western US (*CMJ* #20-112). The World's Mightiest Boy battles Japanese and German forces on the Pibilof Islands off the coast of Alaska, destroying a flying factory (*CMJ* #23-124).

The World's Most Powerful Boy in a southwest US canyon about to be stomped by a dinosaur. *CMJ* #20-112. Art by Al Carreno. © 1944, Fawcett Publications.

The Blue Boy again flies to Alaska to help end the "Totem of Terror" (*CMJ* #26-138), a plot by Japanese saboteurs.

Cap Jr. flies to the coal mining town of Coalridge to stop devastating coal mine fires (*CMJ* #27-142). The Blue Boy of Power battles saboteurs on the west coast and Boulder Dam in a mid-1945 adventure (*CMJ* #30-153). Freddy Freeman is selling newspapers in Washington, D.C. (*MC* #63-159) where he, with the aid of his alter ego, solves "Mystery of the Vanishing Senators! " Freddy and the Mighty Blue Boy help a returning serviceman become re-united with his military service dog that was purchased by a sheep herder in Montana (*CMJ* #31-158). Freddy Freeman establishes a newsstand in the fictional Buzzardville, Arizona (*CMJ* #38-184) where he and his alter ego battle the ghost vigilantes. Freddy spends a weekend on Mr. Botts' farm where he encounters the "Wild Boy" (*MF* #2-190).

Freddy Freeman goes by train to "Little Acres" for a week of vacation with Farmer Jones (*MC* #76-225). Freddy helps a wayward boy named Peanuts on Farmer Jones' farm (*CMJ* #47-234). Cap Jr. battles an octopus and mermen (*CMJ* #51-254) near a newly-surfaced island off the West Coast(?). The World's Mightiest Boy flies to flooded Allentown (PA?) to battle the Wreckers (*MC* #88-294). Cap Jr. fights Paul Bunyan, Jr. near a north woods lumber camp in mid-1948 (*CMJ* #61-314). Capt. Marvel Jr. helps a friend, Joe Beal, win a car race in Carson City, (NV?) (*CMJ* #66-346). Freddy witnesses an ox-pull contest (MF #28-347) when he arrives in Fairfield County (CT?). Sivana Jr. is given time off from reform school to go the Farmer Jones' farm in an effort to rehabilitate the boy villain (*MC* #102-378). Cap Jr. visits Rosebud Acres, a suburb run by reformed crooks (*MC* #103-384). The World's Most Powerful Boy flies again to Hollywood to solve the mystery of the "Fountain of Age" (*MF* #35-389). The Blue Boy flies to Nature Island (?) to expose a "back to nature" hoax (*CMJ* #74-393) perpetuated by Xerxes Quintus. Freddy and newspaper publisher Paxton Crumpett travel to the western town, Crooked Creek (*CMJ* #75- 397), where they (and Cap Jr.) encounter Black Mask and his gang.

Freddy and Mrs Wagner visit New York City (*MC* #107-406) where Sivana Jr causes the Statue of Liberty to vanish. The World's Most Powerful Boy once again travels to the north woods this time visiting a lumber mill to solve a murder mystery (*CMJ* #79-491). Captain Marvel Jr. rushes to the towns of Midvale, Dobbsville and Larksburg to stop the spread of the crime germ (*CMJ* #80-423). Cap Jr. goes to the western US to Terra Mesa to help a Native American, named Running Deer (*CMJ* #82-436) find out what is really important in life. The Blue Boy battles modern buccaneers at the fishing village of Keesport (*CMJ* #82-437). Cap Jr. travels to the Blue Mountain country to check out the Hillybilly Capt. Marvel Jr. (*CMJ* #87-463).

Captain Marvel Jr. travels out West to check on some oil investments for Red Riley, and gets involved with Amerindians and a crooked oil syndicate (*CMJ* #94-497). The Blue Boy visits the Purple Mountains region to battle a crooked ski lodge owner (*CMJ* #97-514). Freddy Freeman delivers some apples to a dinner at the United Nations (apparently New York City), and then goes to Mortown (*CMJ* #98-519). Cap Jr. rescues an obsessed artist from his folly in the Florida Everglades (*CMJ* #98-521). The Blue Boy addresses the United Nations (New York City) about the threat of Sivana Jr. (*CMJ* #99-523). Freddy Freeman and Red O'Reilly are traveling through the Mohave Desert when they encounter the ancient mirage city (*CMJ* #106-547). Dinosaur Rock is the location where the Blue Boy helps a young giant

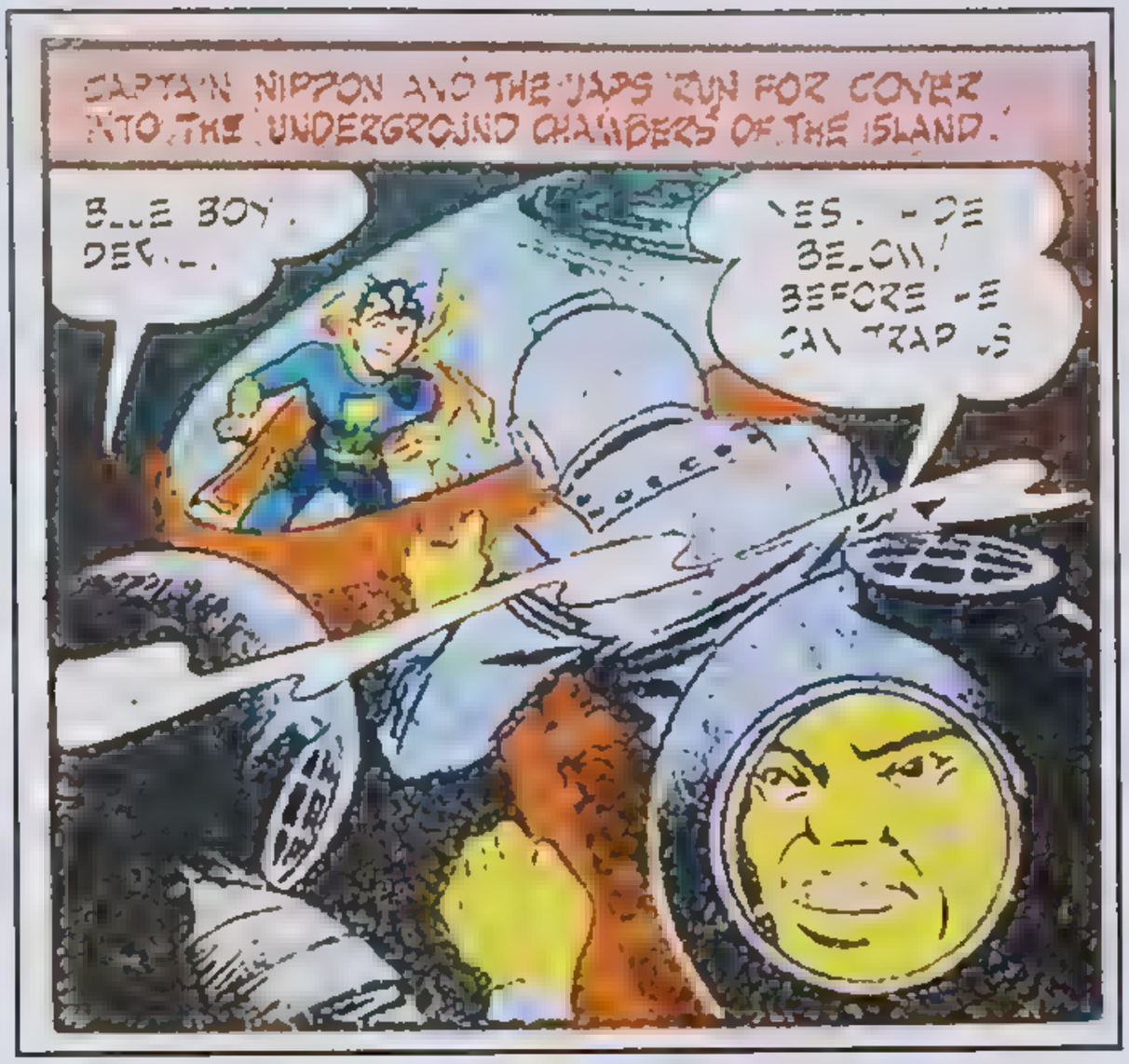
find his real parents (*CMJ* #109-558). Freddy Freeman visits a Washington, DC night club where he is amazed by Vampira's performance (*CMJ* #116-583).

Globe Trotter

Freddy (and his alter ego) travels to wartime London and Germany early in the run (*MC* #27-7, *MC* #28- 8, *MC* #29-9). He visits the fictional African nation of Dazaggar in late 1942 (*CMJ* #1-14). In early 1943 Freddy and Cap Jr. travel to Eastern Europe (*MC* #36-33) to help the Yugoslavian guerillas fight the Nazi invaders. The World's Most Powerful Boy takes two young boys to witness and participate in the Battle of Stalingrad (*MC* #43-70). Cap Jr. flies to an isolated Chilean coastal island where he rescues a group of shipwrecked people (*CMJ* #14-83). The Blue Boy journeys to a tropical island (*MC* #48-95) run by crooks. The World's Mightiest Boy travels to the Philippines (*CMJ* #21-117) to help American POWs win a baseball game against their Japanese captors. In 1944 (*CMJ* #24-128) Freddy is in Mexico where he and Cap Jr. confronts the "Mad Matador".

Cap Jr. goes to Central America to prevent an Axis plot from destroying the Panama Canal (*CMJ* #25-132). The Blue Boy takes a bigoted bully boy to Greece to witness the fight against the German occupation *(CMJ* #25-134). This causes the boy to have a change of heart. Freddy gets a position as a cabin boy with an anthropological expedition to Africa (*CMJ* #27-140). Cap Jr. flies to the South Pacific (*CMJ* #28-145) to battle an impostor (a Japanese lookalike). Freddy and the World's Mightiest Boy help a road construction company (*CMJ* #29-149) in the Canadian North Woods. Cap Jr. battles General Nippo and Dr. Satsu on Skull Island in the South Pacific in mid-1945 (*CMJ* #30-154). In the summer of 1945 Cap Jr. returns to the Philippines (*CMJ* #31-156) where he smashes the threat of the Japanese Robombs.

Freddy and Cap Jr. help thwart a plot against King Denis in the fictional European kingdom of Bengaria (*MC* #67-175). CMJ visits Arabia to help Ali win the heart of the Sultan's beautiful daughter, Fatima (*CMJ* #38-181). In late 1946 Freddy and Cap Jr. confront the Zombie Master in Haiti (*MC* #75-220). Freddy is kidnapped and taken to a small European kingdom to pose as young Prince William (*CMJ* #46-227). Captain Marvel Jr. flies to the Amazon (*CMJ* #47-235) to solve the riddle of the "Flying Men." The World's Mightiest Boy deals with Jumbo the Whale (*CMJ* #48-240) in the Pacific Ocean. Freddy poses as a stowaway on a sailing ship

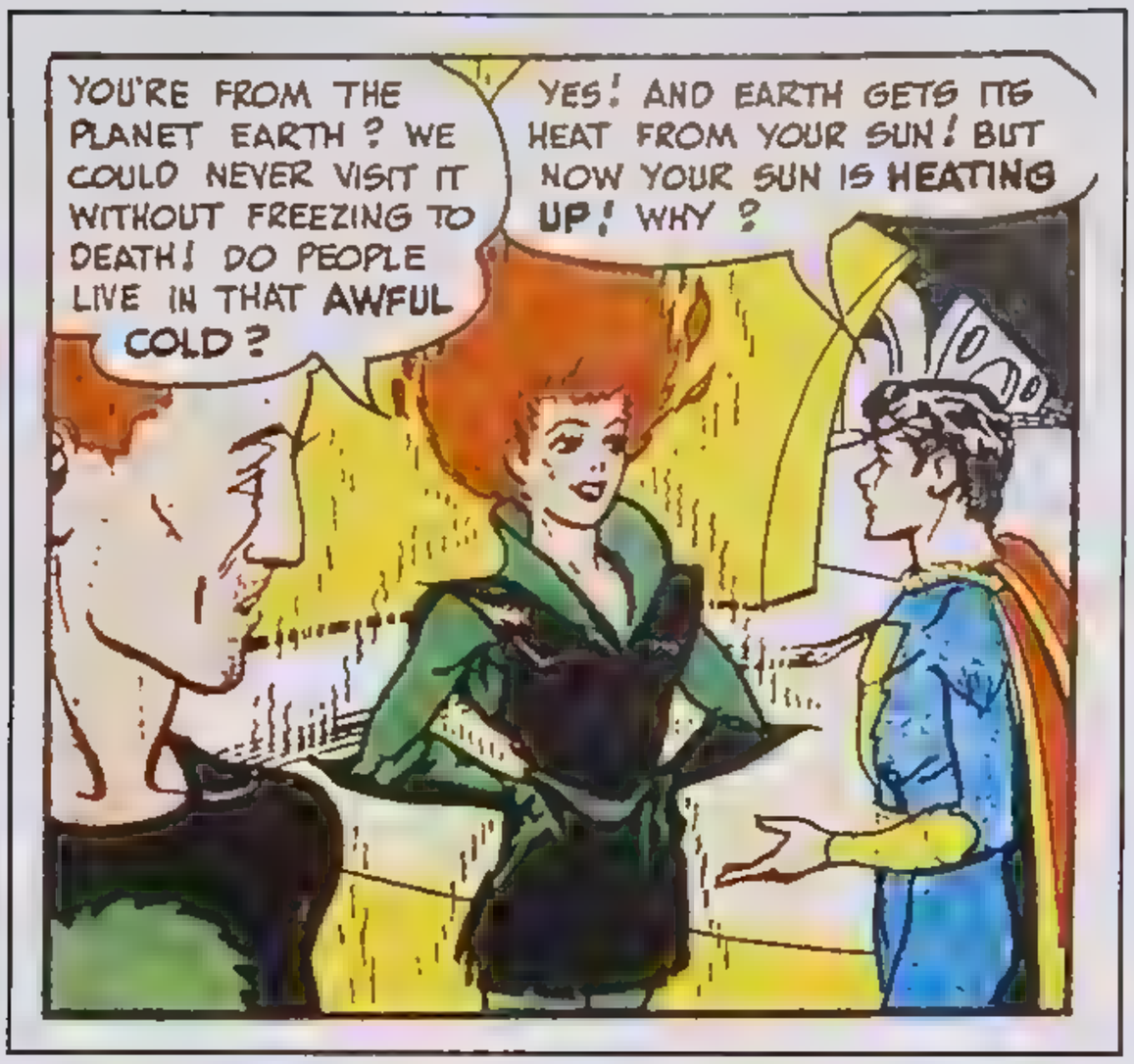

CAPTAIN NIPPON AND THE JAPS RUN FOR COVER INTO THE UNDERGROUND CHAMBERS OF THE ISLAND.
BLUE BOY. DE
YES. DE BELOW! BEFORE DE CAN TRAP US

Captain Marvel Jr taking on Captain Nippon underwater near the Philippine Islands. *CMJ* #31-156. © 1945, Fawcett Publications.

whose purpose is to travel around the horn of South America (*MC* #81-253) for a young man to win an inheritance. CapJr. visits Bhokal' a Asian country in the Himalaya mountains, concerning the Pyramid of Eternity (*CMJ* #55-277). The Mighty Blue Boy flies to the Mid-South Altantic to rescue survivors of a shipwreck (*CMJ* #58-298).

The World's Most Powerful Boy captures the World's Largest Dog in Africa (*MC* #89-300). Cap Jr. visits Canada (*MF* #22-311) where he busts a criminal who has sought refuge for a crime committed in America. Marvel Junior flies to Paris, France and New York City to request leading dress designers to help Mr. Taylor restore his dress selection which was destroyed in a fire (*CMJ* #62-322). The World's Mightiest Boy again flies to the Amazon in search of the missing anthropologist, Henry Todd (*CMJ* #76-403). Cap Jr. returns to Egypt (*MF* #39-411) about an ancient scroll containing a curse. The Blue Boy flies to an island southwest of Bali where a giant bird, the enchanted Roc, dwells (*MF* #42-427).

Cap Jr. returns to Africa in search of explorer, Ellis Chalmers (*CMJ* #81-431). The Blue Boy goes whale searching in the Atlantic, Pacific and other oceans (*MF* #46-449). Cap Jr. flies to the Wartz Forest (in Europe) to hunt for his friend Red O'Riley (*CMJ* #85-454). Cap Jr. follows a bird that lays golden eggs to a "Far north island" (*CMJ* #86-459). The World's Most Powerful Boy makes another trip to the Amazon where this time he encounters a race of giant ants (*CMJ* #89-471). Freddy once again is kidnapped and taken aboard a ship headed to the Arctic


YOU'RE FROM THE PLANET EARTH ? WE COULD NEVER VISIT IT WITHOUT FREEZING TO DEATH! DO PEOPLE LIVE IN THAT AWFUL COLD ?
YES! AND EARTH GETS ITS HEAT FROM YOUR SUN! BUT NOW YOUR SUN IS HEATING UP! WHY ?

The World's Mightiest Boy visits the people who live inside the Sun. *CMJ* #76-401. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

in search of the giant Ice Monster (*CMJ* #91-480).

Captain Marvel Jr. flies over a tropical South Seas island which he helps by supplying fuel and clothing to resist a worldwide ice age caused by Sivana Jr. (CMJ #100-527). Cap Jr. battles a huge blob-like monster in the European village of San Lorenz (*CMJ* #103-536). The Blue Boy travels to the kingdom of Elluria (apparently in Europe) to protect "Solomon's buried treasure" that is said to be there (*CMJ* #103-537). The World's Most Powerful Boy helps save the natives of a South Seas island named Lakoto which turns out to be a gigantic whale (*CMJ* #107-550). Freddy Freeman is once again kidnapped and taken aboard a ship where he and other men are transported to an island to work as slaves mining gold (*MC* #127-553).

The World's Mightiest Boy battles the Mongol Monster in Korea (*CMJ* #115-578). Captain Marvel Jr. and Professor Edgewise visit London and meets, Prime Minister Winston Churchill (*CMJ* #117-585) probably the first time since 1942 (MC #27-7). Captain Marvel Jr. revisits Korea to help captured American POWs (*MC* #132-588). The World's Most Powerful Boy again defeats the Mongol Monster in Korea (*CMJ* #118-590). Another Korean War story centers on drug mind control with an American regiment that the World's Most Powerful Boy must help (*CMJ* #119-594). In the last solo Captain Marvel Jr. story he battles, again in Korea, a giant robot controlled by the evil Vampira (*MF* #85-600).

Where No Mightiest Boy has gone before

Not only did Captain Marvel Jr.'s adventures take him around the United States and foreign countries, but he also visited other planets in our Solar System and beyond.

The World's Mightiest Boy flies to Mars where he confronts the tyrannical ruler, King Kull (*CMJ* #6-41). Captain Marvel Jr. travels to the moon, Venus, and Mars to stop an interplanetary threat posed by Adolf Hitler (*CMJ* #10-61). Captain Marvel Jr. brings back rocks from the moon almost 25 years before Neal Armstrong set foot on Earth's natural satellite (*CMJ* #28-146). The World's "Fastest" Boy travels "faster than light" to Gamma Gemini, 5000 light years away, to destroy a disintegrating beam that would annihilate the Earth (*CMJ* #60-307). Much later Cap Jr. flies to the moon to battle rogue scientists bent on bombing the Earth (*CMJ* #71-373). The World's Most Powerful Boy flies to the Sun where he puts an end to a war between to two races of Solar beings (*CMJ* #76-401). CapJr. once again travels to the moon in an effort to stop a swindle (*CMJ* #87-462). The Blue Boy flies to Neptune, Saturn, and Mars to stop the "Cosmic War Dust" (*CMJ* #93-491). Cap Jr. reconstructs the destroyed planet Smorxx (*CMJ* #98-520). The World's Most Powerful Boy has an adventure on Pluto as a United Nations ambassador (*CMJ* #111-564). Freddy, Leroy Marks, and many others are hijacked and taken to Jupiter in a late 1952 tale (*CMJ* #114-575). Freddy Freeman is transported to a distant planet by a huge hypnotic eye (*CMJ* #115-579). (For more detail see "Menaces from Outer Space" pp. 34-38)

Summary

Captain Marvel Jr. traveled to the far corners of the United States including California, Alaska, Minnesota, Florida, Maine, Arizona, and other states-- where ever his adventures took him. He had had many adventures in foreign countries such as England, France, Germany, Soviet Russia, Yugoslavia, Greece, Africa, Arabia, Mexico, Panama, the Philippines, the South Pacific, Canada, and many other nations real or imaginary. He also had undertakings in the Arctic and in Antarctica.

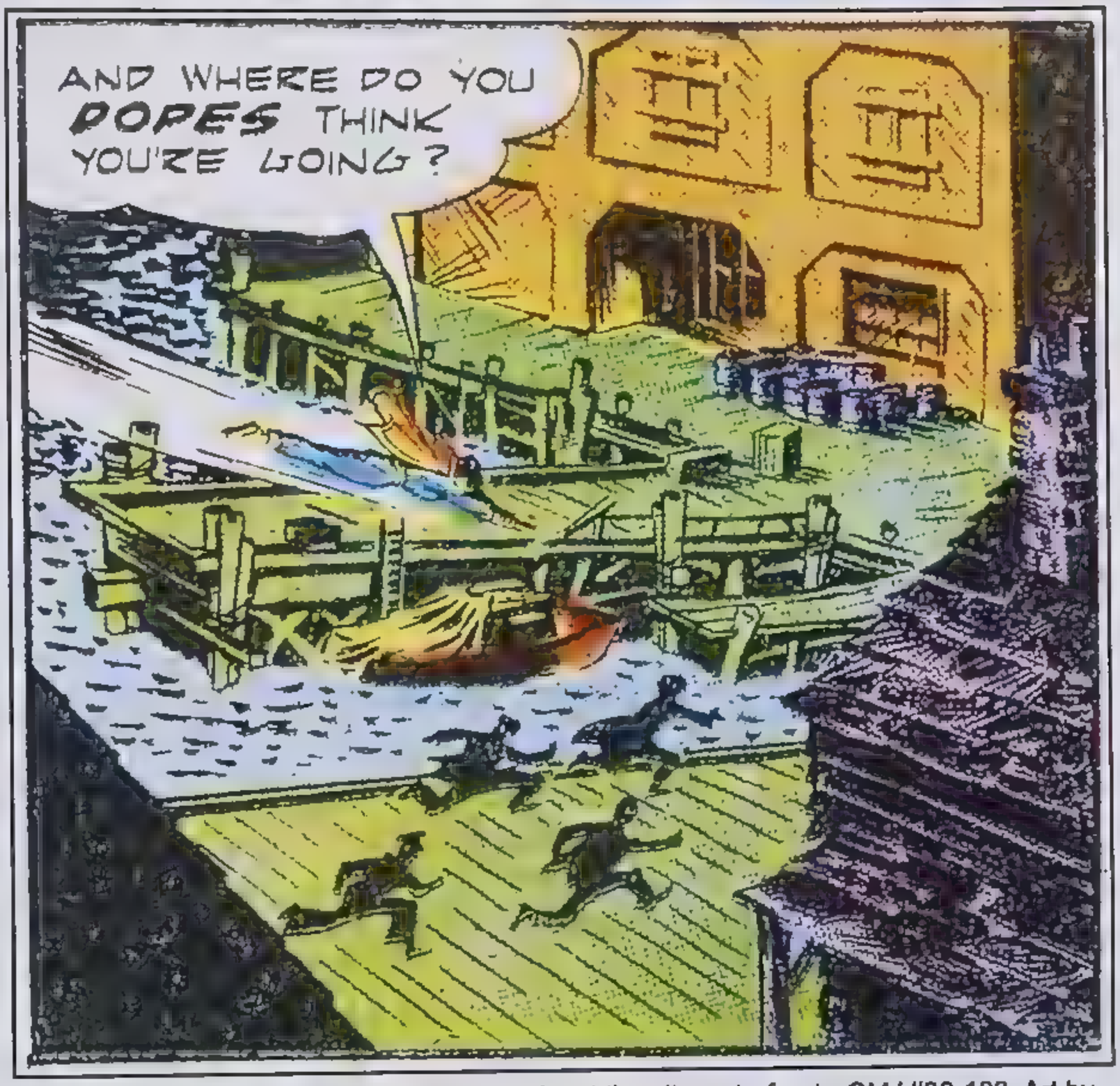
The World's Most Powerful Boy also traveled the heavens where he fought against injustice and destructive forces on Mars, Venus, Jupiter, and other unearthly places.

Endnotes:

[1]. John Cochran & P.C. Hamerlinck, Captain Marvel's City-Visiting Tour Part I & II, *Alter Ego* 3:68, May 2007; pp. 82-87 3:69 pp. 84-88.

The Home Town of Freddy Freeman?

Freddy Freeman's home town was well constructed from the many clues littered in his stories. So just where did Freddy and the Blue Boy call home?



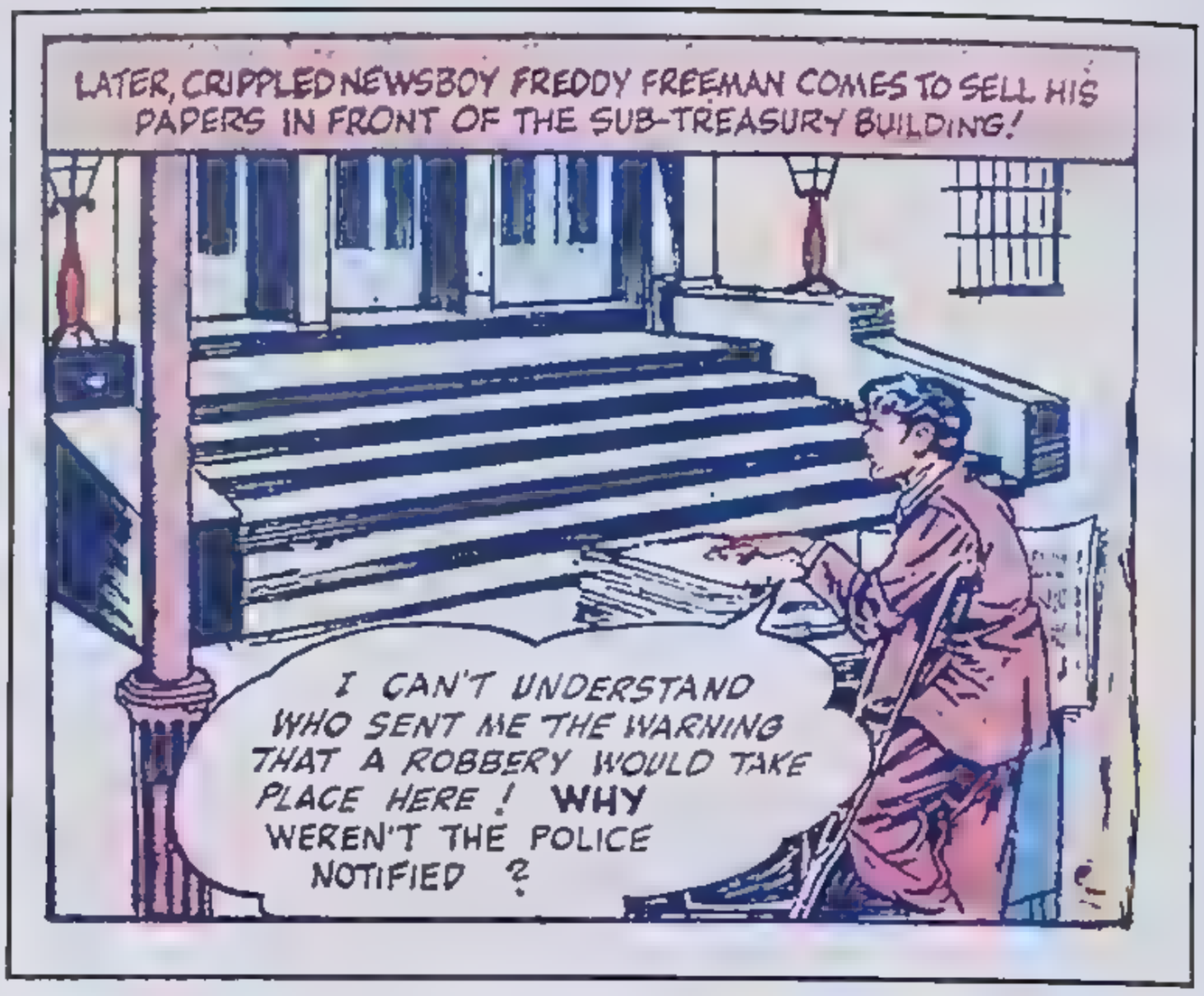
The Blue Boy of Power pursuing some crooks at the city waterfront. *CMJ* #38-183. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1946, Fawcett Publications.

The city where Freddy Freeman had his residence and newsstand business was not actually stated in the vast majority of the Captain Marvel Jr. stories. Perhaps the editors and writers didn't want to call out a specific location where Freddy and Captain Marvel Jr. claimed as their home base. Perhaps the editors figured the readers wanted to claim the Blue Boy for their own home town. It is certainly possible also that the Fawcett powers-that-be didn't have a specific city in mind. However they did leave clues —some subtle and some overt— about the city the World's Mightiest Boy protected. Superman and Batman had their fictional Metropolis and Gotham City, both of which were based on New York City and other large American and even international cities. In the 1960s, Stan Lee based his Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, The Avengers and other characters squarely in New York City.

The Big Apple

New York City was certainly the site of a number of Cap Jr's initial adventures. Early in the Captain Marvel Jr. run, the Blue Boy of Power visits New York City, where he battles Captain Nazi and twice repels a German aerial bombing attack on the great city (*MC* #34-23; *AHC* #1-50). The World's Mightiest Boy confronts the "Marble Madness", which sends huge animated stone statues rampaging down Fifth Avenue, near the Natural History Museum and the harbor of New York City (*MC* #41-60). In this story, we note Freddy selling newspapers in the metropolis. Captain Marvel Jr. battles the giant Nazi super soldier in the streets of New York City where Freddy "peddles his wares..." (*MC* #42-65). Later, Captain Nazi abducts a patient from a New York City hospital and takes him to Baffin Land (*CMJ* #12-74) where Cap Jr. confronts the super Aryan. Freddy Freeman meets a telepathic penguin in the New York Aquarium in Battery Park (New York City) before launching an adventure to Antarctica (*MC* #44-75). It is important to understand that Freddy and Captain Marvel Jr. were on the move during 1942 and 1943, visiting many locations and cities both in the U.S. and overseas (see pp. 21-22). A Standard Oil Refinery is one location for a wartime story from 1944 (*CMJ*

#17-97). This is likely the current Bayway Refinery in Linden, NJ near the New York City metro area. Also in 1944, we again find the crippled newsboy peddling newspapers in New York City in the "Indian Braves of Wall Street " (*CMJ* #20-111). Freddy and his friend Sylvester Jones became involved with a steamboat race up the Hudson River (*CMJ* #22-120). Freddy Freeman visits New York City in mid-1946 (*CMJ* #43-210), where his alter ego battles Dr. Encyclo and his beasts. Freddy Freeman raises funds to build the "Metropolis Hospital" in late 1946 (*CMJ* #46-226). Mr. Hogsworth, a ruthless Wall Street businessman, uses any means to wrestle control of some land containing a valuable oil deposit from a company in which Freddy Freeman has stock (*CMJ* #55-279). This story could either take place in New York or neighboring Pennsylvania. One can only assume that New York City was the site of some of the Blue Boy's adventures during the war years, but it was not necessarily his home base. In 1949, Freddy Freeman and his landlady, Mrs Wagner, visited New York City (*MC* #107-406), where Cap Jr. stops Sivana Jr. from highjacking the Statue of Liberty. This indicates that from, the middle of 1947, at least, Freddy was living and working outside of New York City.[1]


LATER, CRIPPLED NEWSBOY FREDDY FREEMAN COMES TO SELL HIS PAPERS IN FRONT OF THE SUB-TREASURY BUILDING!
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHO SENT ME THE WARNING THAT A ROBBERY WOULD TAKE PLACE HERE ! WHY WEREN'T THE POLICE NOTIFIED ?

Freddy Freeman in front of the Sub-Treasury Building. *CMJ* #44-216. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1946, Fawcett Publications.

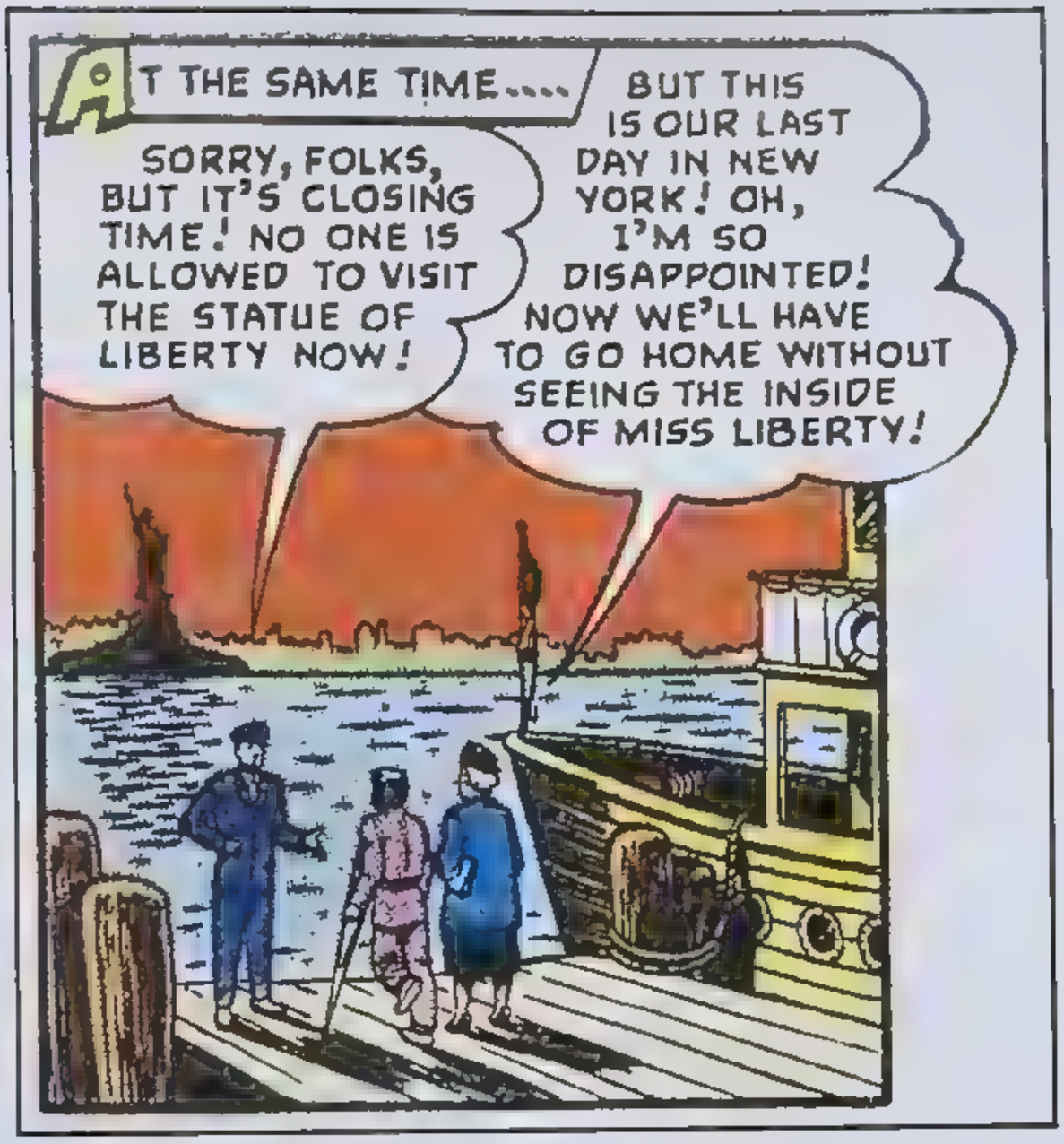
I'd rather be in Philadelphia

Over the course of the strip we are told a number of things about Freddy's city. The city Cap Jr. lives in has a Chinatown (*MF* #24-323; *MF* #27-341). There is a science museum (*CMJ* #68-357), a casino (*CMJ* #68-358) and a zoo (*CMJ* #35-169; *CMJ* #51-255; *MF* #53-484) in the city. This city has a Natural History Museum that the ancient villain Greybeard tries to rob (*CMJ* #37-177). Freddy sells newspapers at a train terminal (*MC* #68-180), and a trolley track and trains as well as a college campus are in the city (*MC* #85-276). Apparently the city has an ice hockey team (*MF* #3-196) and a major airport (*CMJ* #80-423). The city has skyscrapers (*MC* #71-197, *CMJ* #46-226, 228)), a concert hall (*CMJ* #43-213), a Whiffany's (Tiffany's) jewelry store (*CMJ* #50-251) and an Avon Theatre in Freddy's neighborhood (*CMJ* #44-216; *CMJ* #54-273; *CMJ #64-331; CMJ* #69-364).[2] There is an observatory at the city college (*CMJ* #97-516) and horse racing *(CMJ* #92-489). The major items that point to one certain city as being Freddy Freeman's home town are these. The city is a ocean port with a waterfront (*MC* #64-163; *CMJ* #38-183; *CMJ* #41-200; *CMJ* #50-249; *MF* #29-353; *CMJ* #68-355; and *MF* #53-484). There is a river near the city (*CMJ* #54-274) with ferry service across the river (*CMJ* #67-352). There was probably a ship building facility at the docks (*MC* #82-258), a lighthouse nearby (*CMJ* #32-162) and a Coast Guard station (*MC* #69-185). There is an Arsenal and many large buildings in the city (*CMJ* #43-212).[3] The last major item is this city is the home of a Treasury Building (*MC* #52-114; *MC* #74-215; *MF* #53-484) and sub-Treasury *(CMJ* #44-216). There are U.S. Treasury Buildings in Philadelphia, Denver, San Francisco, West Point and Fort Knox. The U.S. Treasury was shown in an early story (*MC* #43-70), but probably refers to the Washington, DC facility. Since Denver, West Point. and Fort Knox are landlocked, this leaves Philadelphia and San Francisco as likely candidates. There are several stories where CapJr/Freddy Freeman travel to the West Coast. These were times he went for visits or special assignments, not to live there permanently (*CMJ* #2-19; *CMJ* #4-31; *CMJ* #15-87; *CMJ* #16-91; *CMJ* #30-153; *CMJ* #106-547). This very likely eliminates San Francisco. This leaves Philadelphia. Philadelphia has all of the above location elements and features. The City of Brotherly Love seems to be a very good fit for Freddy's home town, especially in the post-war period.[4]

However

There are some elements that don't fit with this location. In a 1947 story (*CMJ* #51-256), Freddy Freeman walks by a wall with this sign posted, "The New Home of Fawcett

Publications Wm F Babor, Contractor." Babor was a New York City building contractor.[5] The address for the Fawcett offices were at 22 West Putnam Ave, Greenwich, CT in *CMJ* #53 (September 1947), and it changed in *CMJ* #54 (October 1947) to Fawcett Place, Greenwich, CT.[6] Since Freddy is shown hawking newspapers in that story on page one (*CMJ* #51-256), this seems to be his home town. This, perhaps, was a throwaway sign placed in the strip, not to be taken seriously as a location indicator, but merely as a celebration of the new Fawcett company headquarters. In the very next issue Freddy is transferred to a newsstand on "the other side of town." (p. 1, *CMJ* #52-260). It seems as if Freddy has lived in that "town" some time before this 1947 story. In the 1945 story, "In Lunatic Larceny" (*CMJ* #32-161), Freddy is selling newspapers in front of the Rye Exchange Bank. Rye is a New York town (Westchester County) near the Connecticut border. West Point, somewhat north of New York City, could be seen as a Treasury station location, though, that is pushing it as the Treasury Building(s) seemingly is in Cap Jr.'s city proper, rather than in a fringe location. Freddy visited his friend Farmer Jones at "Little Acres" (*MC* #76-225). There is a Little Acres farm in South Glastonbury, CT. (about 86 miles from Greenwich). Freddy later visited Farmer Jones who has a farm in Fairfield County (*MF* #28-347). Fairfield County, CT, is the county (bordering New York) in which Greenwich is located. While the weight of evidence doesn't support Greenwich, Connecticut alone as being Freddy's home city, Greenwich becomes a strong contender for Freddy's hometown taken as a part of the greater New York City metro area.


AT THE SAME TIME....
SORRY, FOLKS, BUT IT'S CLOSING TIME! NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO VISIT THE STATUE OF LIBERTY NOW!
BUT THIS IS OUR LAST DAY IN NEW YORK! OH, I'M SO DISAPPOINTED! NOW WE'LL HAVE TO GO HOME WITHOUT SEEING THE INSIDE OF MISS LIBERTY!

Freddy Freeman and Mrs. Wagner visit New York City *MC* #107-406. Art by Kurt Schaffenberger. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

Again, however...

To make things more complicated (and confusing) is a 1949 tale where Freddy Freeman and Mrs. Wagner attend a town meeting honoring a World War II hero. The town is named Middletown (*MC* #105-394). There is a Middletown, CT (Middlesex County). However, this New England town is landlocked and doesn't have a treasury building. There is also a Middletown, NY (Orange County), which is just north of the New York City metro area. This Middletown has the same problems. One rationalization is that Freddy and Mrs. Wagner were visiting Middletown and attended the ceremony for war hero Robert Green. However, we see Officer Bellows and Freddy delivering newspapers, so it seems as if this is the newsboy's home town.[7]

In summary, we are presented with several hometown solutions. One, the Fawcett editors had no specific city in mind for the home of Freddy Freeman, especially in regard to the the post-war and the 1950s eras (perhaps the town was a composite of several cities). Two, the city of Philadelphia is a very close fit for the city we see depicted from the clues in the Captain Marvel Jr. stories appearing in *Master Comics*, CMJ's own title, and in the *Marvel Family*. Or third, that most of Freddy's stories could have happened in Greenwich, CT, and the greater New York City Metro area seems evident by the sign shown in *CMJ* #51 and other indications.

Endnotes

[1] Freddy moved into Mrs Wagner's Boarding House in *CMJ* #52-260, (August 1947).

[2] There was an Avon Theater in Philadelphia from 1924-1956).

[3] Freddy's newsstand at the corner of Oak and Main seems to be inconclusive. There is an Oak Street and a Main Street in Philadelphia but they are parallel streets that don't intersect. There is an Oak Street in Greenwich, CT.

[4] Allentown is the site of flooding in CMJ story in *MC* #88-294. Allentown is 61-64 miles from downtown Philadelphia. Historically Allentown, PA has experienced severe flooding.

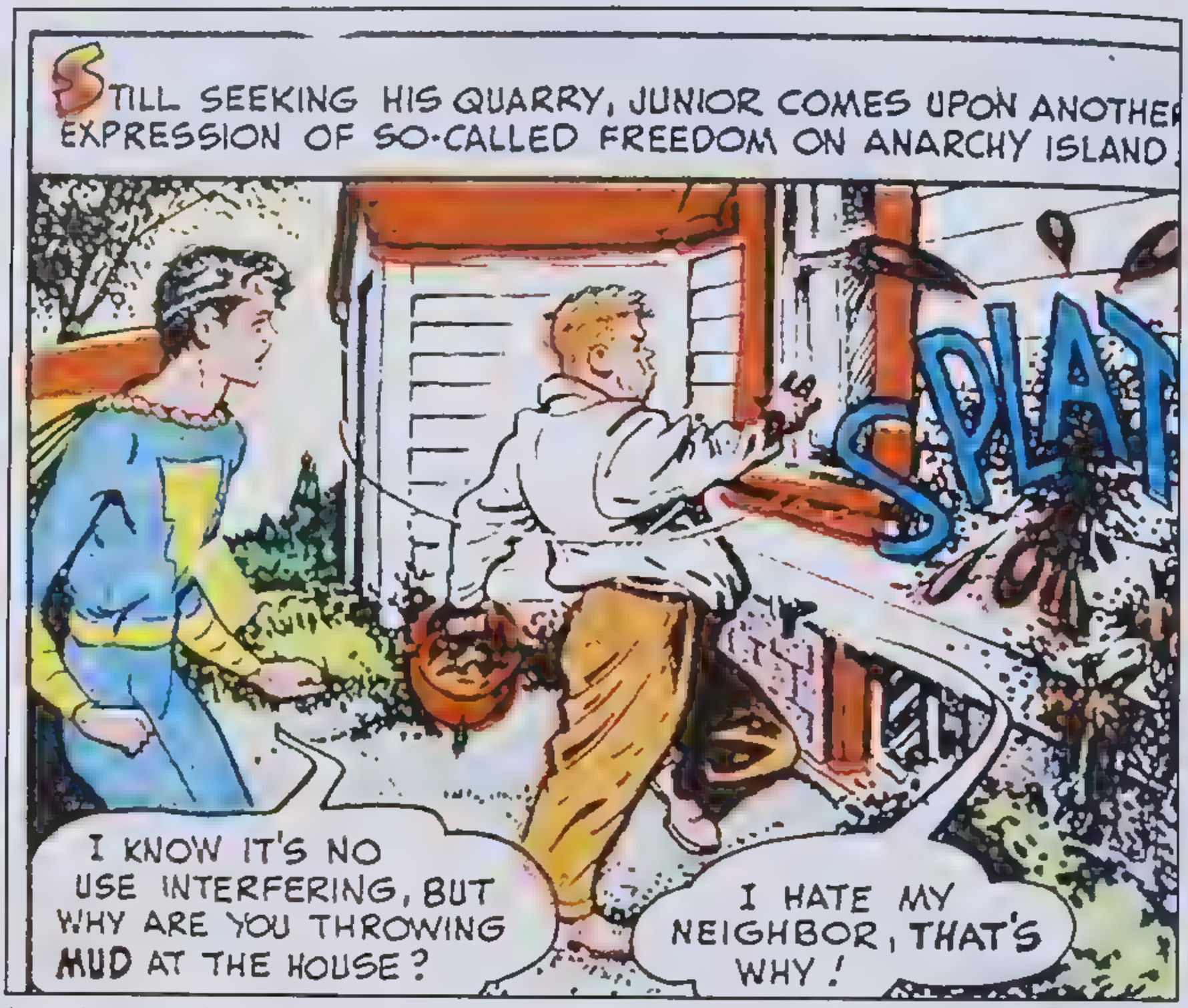
[5] William F. Babor was a building contractor in 132 East Fortieth St, New York City (From *The American Contractor* April 15, 1922, p. 42).

[6] These two locations are some distance away from each other. Freddy's apartment's address before his move to Mrs Wagner's Boarding house was 85 Center St (CMJ #40-192). There is an Center Road in Old Greenwich, CT.

[7] There are five Middletowns in Pennsylvania. Middletown, Dauphin County, Middletown (96 to 104 miles from downtown Philadelphia), Northampton County (62 to 73 miles from downtown Philadelphia), Middletown Twp, Bucks County (24-29 miles from downtown Philadelphia), Middletown Twp, Delaware County (16 to 24 miles from downtown Philadelphia), and Middletown, McKean County, Pennsylvania (NW PA).

Blue Boy Trivia

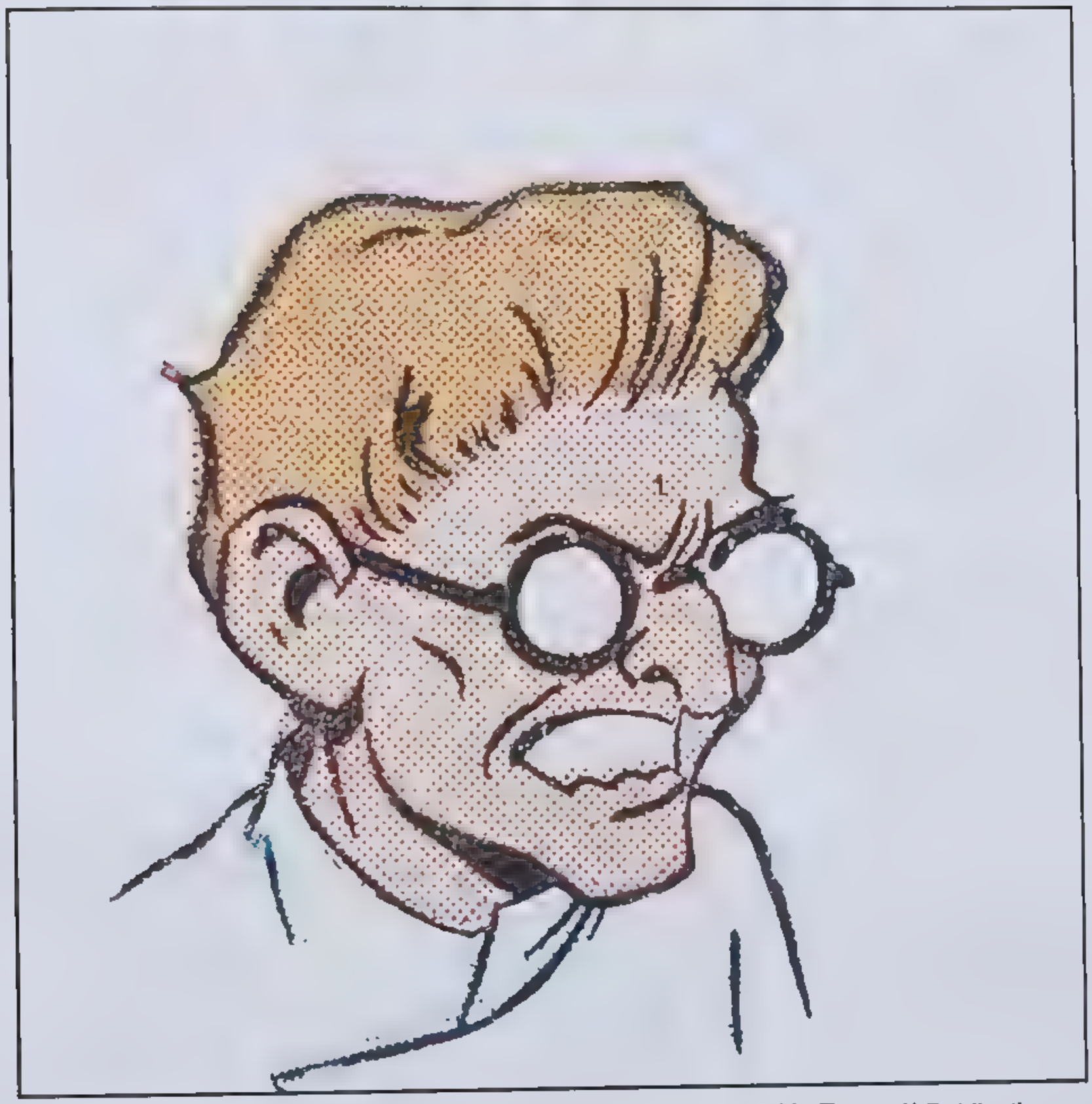
The Many Epithets of Captain Marvel Jr.


STILL SEEKING HIS QUARRY, JUNIOR COMES UPON ANOTHER EXPRESSION OF SO-CALLED FREEDOM ON ANARCHY ISLAND!
I KNOW IT'S NO USE INTERFERING, BUT WHY ARE YOU THROWING MUD AT THE HOUSE?
SPLAT
I HATE MY NEIGHBOR, THAT'S WHY!

A rare instance where Captain Marvel Jr. is called just "Junior". *CMJ* #79-417. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

Captain Marvel Jr. was called a number of nicknames by the writers, friends, and foes. Certainly his most popular appellations were "The World's Mightiest Boy" (*CMJ* #41-228, et al) and "The World's Most Powerful Boy" (*MC* #81-113; *CMJ* #62-322). He was called early on "The World's Most Sensational Boy Fighter" (*MC* #23-3) and "The World's Most Sensational Boy" (*MC* #32-12). A young black boy called Cap Jr. "Capin Movil Jr." (*MC* #25-5). He was called the "Boy Marvel" and Sivana Jr. called him "You Blue Cheese" (both in *MF* #84-598). He is called "Crime's Blue Nemesis" (*CMJ* #80-425). Sivana rails against CMJ as "That Blue Terror" (*CMJ* #29-150) a name repeated by ghosts (CMJ #38-184). He is titled the "Blue Boy of Power" (*MF* #7-219). Capt. Nazi calls Captain Marvel Jr. "Wonder Boy" (*CMJ* #5-36). CMJ is titled "America's Mightiest Defender" (*CMJ* #5-36). CMJ is called "an Invinicible Flying Blue Marvel" (*MC* #61-151). He is revealed as the "Flying Foe of Evil" (*CMJ* #76-401). He is proclaimed the "Blue Genie" by Arabs (*CMJ* #38-181). He is mentioned as "the Blue Hurricane" as he battles phony Indians (*CMJ* #20-111). Very rarely was Cap Jr.'s name written out as "Captain Marvel Junior" (*CMJ* #20-112). He is called the "Champion Ice-Breaker" in a story about a scientist who invents a freezing ray (*CMJ* #20-113). He is known as "The World's Strongest Boy" when battling stamp thieves (*CMJ* #33-165). Writer's caption, twice, proclaims him the "Mighty Boy in Blue" (*MC* #73-209; *CMJ* #46-226). He is the "World's Fastest Boy" as he rescues a falling man (*CMJ* #46-226, *CMJ* #62-322). A introductory caption calls Cap Jr. "Your Hero" in a Christmas story (*CMJ* #46-229). "A Wondrous Lad of Might" and the "Black An' Blue Boy" are epithets used for CMJ in *MF* #34-383. He was an "Blazing Bolt of Blue" against Japanese divers who called him a "Blue Brat," "Blue Boy" and "Devil" (*CMJ* #31-156). A princess calls him a "Blue Knight" (*CMJ* #64-334). "The Blue Boy" is a positive name for CMJ in other times (*CMJ* #65-340). The 1942 Fawcett Writing Rules (*The Fawcett Companion*, p. 25) forbade using "Junior" or "Marvel Jr." when referring to Captain Marvel Jr. However, these monikers did occur. He is called "Junior" in the Marvel Family story in *Marvel Family* #60 (also in *CMJ* #79-417). Freddy Freeman calls Capt. Marvel Jr. "Marvel Jr." in *CMJ* #41-201 (p.2). He is known as "The Flying Boy" in a mid-1948 story (*CMJ* #62-320).

Sivana Jr.



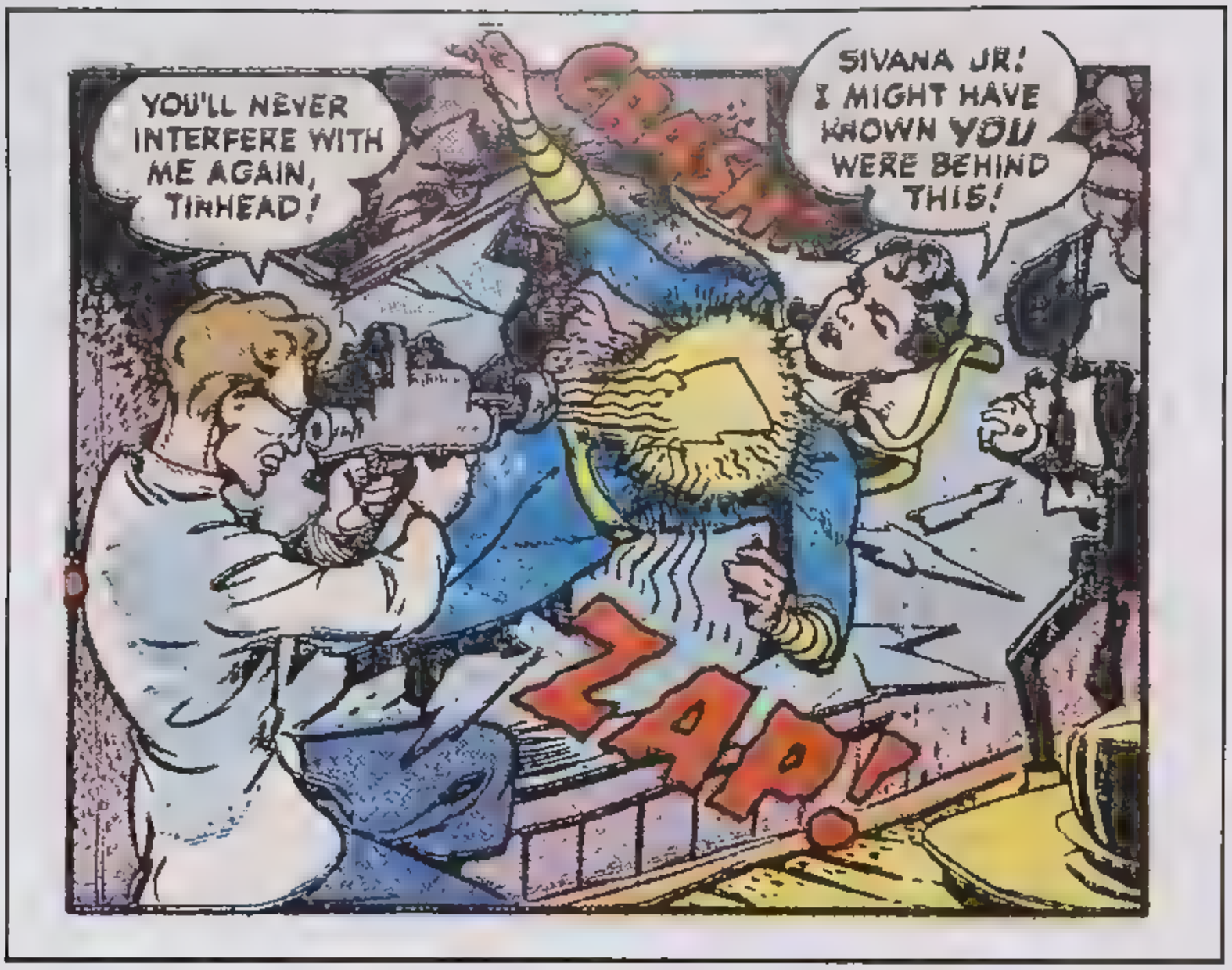
Sivana Jr. *CMJ* #76-404. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

The World's Mightiest Boy had his own Sivana Family member to battle time and time again, the World's Wickedest Boy, Sivana Jr.

As might be supposed, Sivana Junior, the miscreant son of the world's wickedest scientist, Dr. Thaddeus Budog Sivana, was Captain Marvel Jr.'s most frequently-reccurring super-villain. Sivana Jr. was a young and highly intelligent, but thoroughly nasty and a mean-spirited geek. With the exception of his Danny Kaye-like features and wavy brown hair, he was a younger "clone" of his father. His defining features were his intense desire to become "Prince of the Universe" and his extreme jealousy of Captain Marvel Jr.

Sivana Jr. was presented as a sort of demented master chemist and inventor who could formulate sinister potions and construct destructive machines to plague mankind in general and the World's Mightiest Boy in particular.

Sivana Jr. was introduced in *Captain Marvel Adventures* #52 (February 1946) "The Son of Sivana." In this story Dr. Sivana lands in a space ship and is confronted by Captain Marvel. Out of the space ship steps a red-haired younger version of himself. Sivana introduces the young man, "Capt. Marvel, meet my son--Sivana Junior. Junior has been living on



Sivana Jr's zapping Captain Marvel Jr. *CMJ* #93-493. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1951, Fawcett Publications.

Venus all his life! I kept it a secret! But now that he is grown-up to young manhood, he can help me in my work! Heh, heh, heh!" Capt. Marvel visits Freddy Freeman and recruits Captain Marvel Jr. to help battle the Sivana father and son duo. At the end of the story the Sivanas go in different directions. Captain Marvel tells the Blue Boy, "I'll chase down Sivana! You follow Sivana Jr, Capt. Marvel Jr.!" In the next panel CMJ flies off in pursuit of Sivana Jr, "Okay, Cap! From now on, let me handle this Sivana Jr. myself." In the last panel, after being captured by Captain Marvel, Sivana boldly asserts, "So what? You know I can break out of any jail! And so can my son, Sivana, Jr.! He's almost as brilliant as I am! Capt. Marvel Jr's. troubles are just beginning, if he thinks he can keep down Sivana Jr.!" Capt. Marvel concedes, "You may be right, I'm afraid!" At the bottom of the page is an ad ("Battle of the Century") for the February (1946) issue of *CMJ* with the first Sivana Jr. story.

1946

The first Cap Jr./Sivana Jr. story (*CMJ* #36-172) has the World's Worst Boy providing "Jitterbug Pills" to dancing teenagers to give them more energy to dance. The problem is that they can't stop dancing. Sivana Jr. sends one of the

Sivana Jr's lap dog. *MC* #115-450. Art by Charlie Tomsey. © 1950, Fawcett Pub.

parents a note that he will provide an antidote for $50,000. Eventually, Cap Jr. finds the antidote to stop the out of control jitterbugging teenagers and hauls Sivana Jr. off to reform school. Sivana Jr. vows that he will escape. "You'll hear from me again, Capt Marvel Jr!" Sivana Jr. returns in "The Headline Stealer" (*CMJ* #39-186) where the world's wickedest boy, because of jealousy, comes up with a scheme to steal the headlines from Cap Jr. In this story Sivana Jr. teams up with his father, but in the end the Blue Boy nabs the evil father and son duo and returns them to prison.

Several months later (*CMJ* #42-205), Dr. Sivana springs his son from reform school and gives Sivana Jr. a sound spanking because he is ashamed of his son (for being imprisoned for so long). Sivana Jr. uses a mechanical dog to "eat" Freddy Freeman, however, CMJ bursts out of the steel canine to surprise the evil boy. Sivana Jr. escapes "through my 4th dimensional door." He fakes reform and returns to his laboratory to concoct some aging solution which he uses to go on a crime spree (*MC* #74-215). The solution causes extreme rapid aging in its victims allowing Sivana Jr. to commit easy robberies. The World's Most Evil Boy ends 1946 (*CMJ* #45-224) using a "mechanical brain far superior to the human brain" to commit crimes and confuse the police. Near the conclusion of the tale, Sivana Jr. asks the mechanical brain how to defeat Cap Jr. After the computer blows up because it couldn't answer the question the Blue Boy arrives to take Sivana Jr. away.

1947

In the late summer of 1947 Sivana Jr. returns to harass Cap Jr. (*CMJ* #52-262).

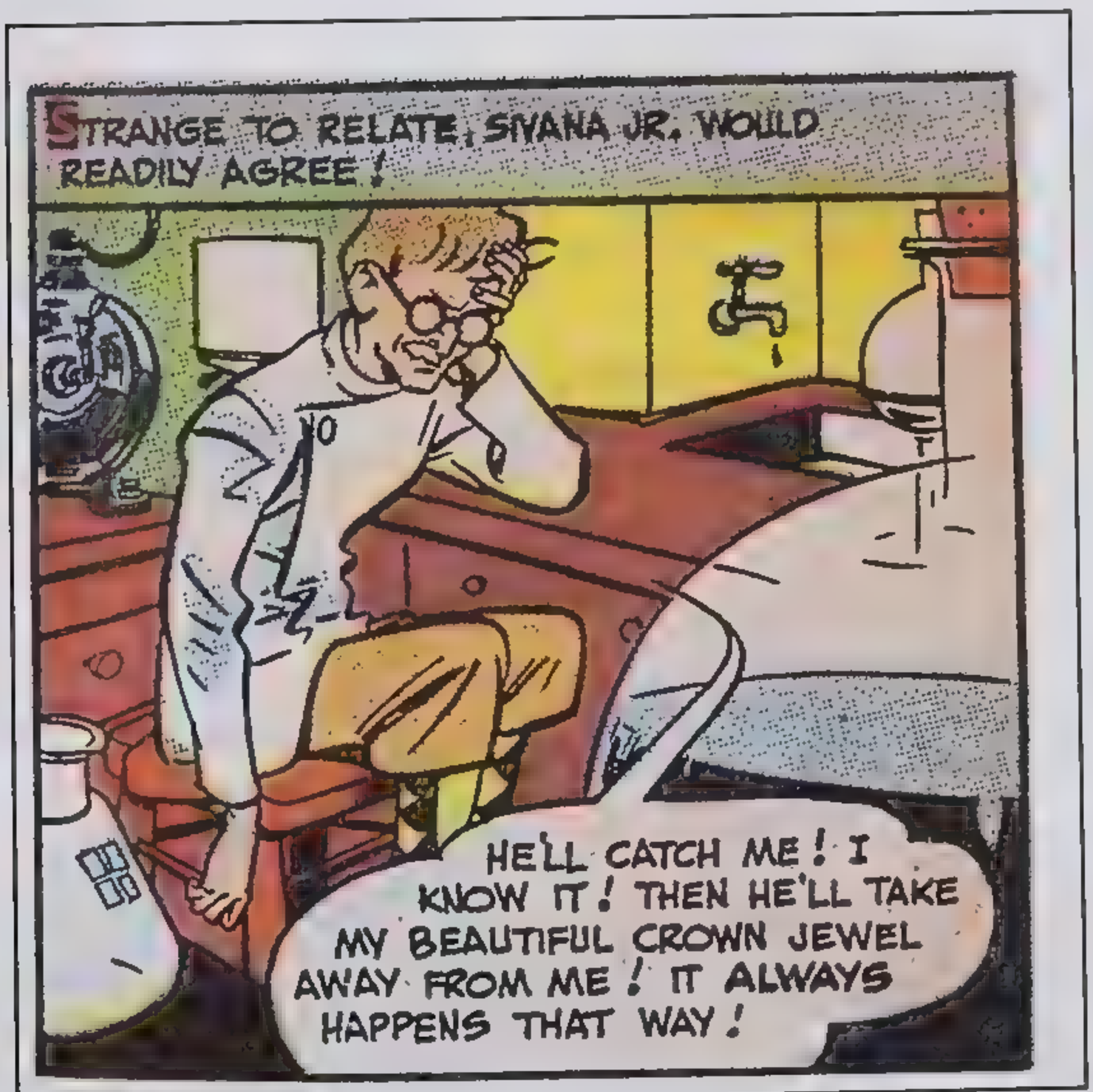
Sivana Jr. re-calibrates his Vibrator Gun. "I've adjusted it to shine out a blue vibration! When it hits any blue object, it will cause the atoms to fly apart! It's like a shrill note shattering glass, only this will be more powerful." Later in the story, Sivana Jr. blasts Cap Jr. with the Vibrator gun, which seemingly destroys the Blue Boy. However, he flies home (unclothed) and gets into Freddy Freeman's clothes. Cap Jr. says, "I have no spare blue suit! So I'll have to wear this suit of Freddy's!" Sivana Jr. shows up later and fights with Freddy/ Junior, who uses Freddy's crutch to subdue the villain. Later, Tom Simmons, a tailor, puts together a new uniform for Cap Jr. Sivana Jr. next invents a human magnet (*MC* #84-270) that attracts people and causes much havoc before the Blue Boy (it didn't work on him) grabs the evil boy and returns him to reform school.

1948

In the early spring of 1948, Sivana Jr. fakes his own death with the intention of framing Captain Marvel Jr. for murder (*CMJ* #59-303). The Blue Boy discovers that Sivana, Jr. has taken suspended animation pills which give the illusion of death for 24 hours. Sivana Jr. becomes a super strong giant (*MC* #93-324) by a special chemical formula and goes on a thieving rampage. Cap Jr. helps a chemist friend create an antidote, which a ravenously hungry Sivana Jr. drinks, reducing him back to his normal skinny weakling self, and landing him back in reform school. Sivana Jr. immediately escapes and comes up with a fantastic scheme of stealing trains and converting them to guns and artillery pieces (*CMJ* #63-326). The Blue Boy again captures Sivana Jr. and smashes his arsenal.

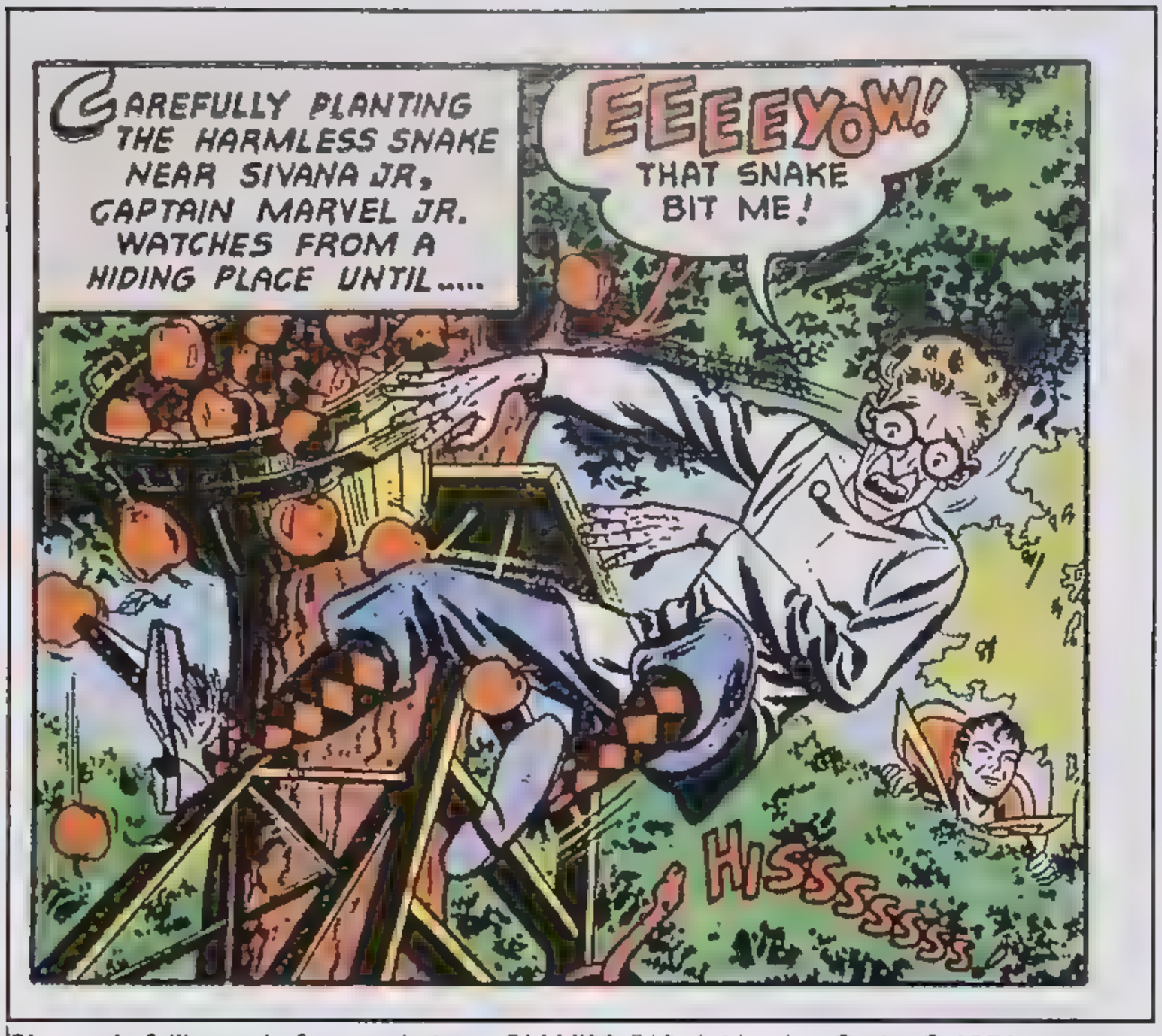
One of Sivana Jr's lighter moments. Art by Bud Thompson. *CMJ* #108-554. © 1952, Fawcett Publications.

During the next month Sivana Jr. traps Freddy Freeman and glass blower, Mr. Thorndyke, in a huge glass beaker (*MC* #94-330) and seals it. Sivana Jr. gloats, "It's just as easy to suffocate two people as it is one! And its more fun, heh, heh!" Freddy breaks free calls for Cap Jr. who captures Sivana Jr. and returns him to reform school. The Wicked Boy pops up again in the next issue (*CMJ* #64-332) with a serum that causes people to do his bidding by lying. He uses this to commit various crimes and even sprays Freddy Freeman with the serum. Sivana Jr. then taunts Freddy by asking, "...who is the most evil boy in the world?" Freddy answers, "Captain Marvel Jr !" and changes into the Blue Boy. Sivana Jr. sprays Cap Jr. with the serum, but with no effect, and the wily young villain is again captured.


STRANGE TO RELATE, SIVANA JR. WOULD READILY AGREE !
HE'LL CATCH ME ! I KNOW IT ! THEN HE'LL TAKE MY BEAUTIFUL CROWN JEWEL AWAY FROM ME ! IT ALWAYS HAPPENS THAT WAY !

Sivana Jr. worries about the Blue Boy. Art by Bud Thompson. *CMJ* #76-404. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

Sivana Jr. gets himself into trouble with some gangsters by impersonating Cap Jr. (*CMJ* #66-344). Freddy and Cap Jr.


CAREFULLY PLANTING THE HARMLESS SNAKE NEAR SIVANA JR, CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. WATCHES FROM A HIDING PLACE UNTIL....
EEEEYOW!
THAT SNAKE BIT ME!
HISSSSSSSS

Sivana Jr. falling out of an apple tree. *CMJ* #98-519. Art by Joe Certa. © 1951, Fawcett Publications.

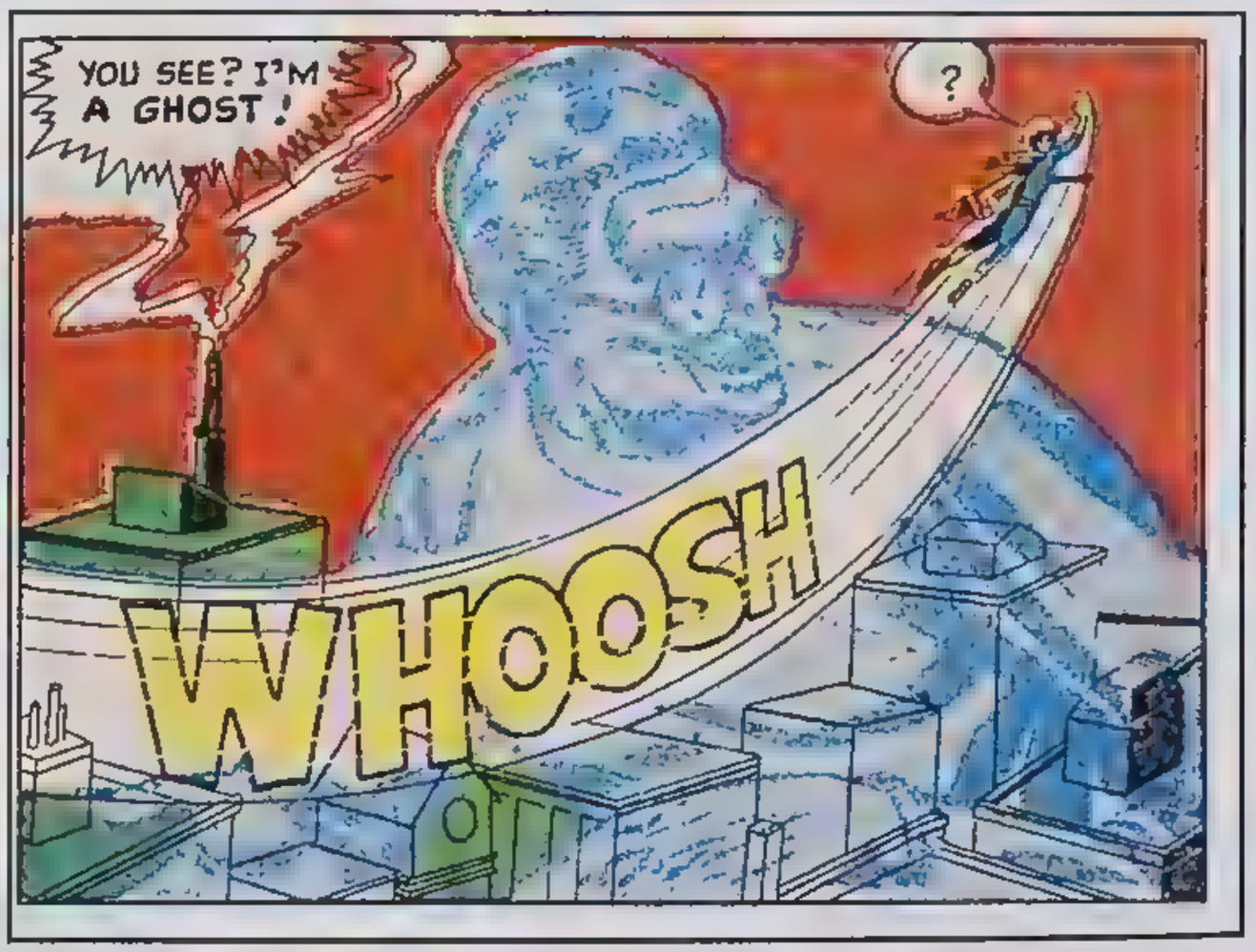
ultimately have to rescue their arch-enemy. The Blue Boy knows how to rub it in, "Guess it was poetic justice, eh, Sivana Jr? Your scheme went wrong. You even had to get me to rescue you! I'll bet you were happy to see me when I arrived, weren't you?" Sivana Jr. ends 1948 by trying to destroy Freddy Freeman with his Dream Machine (*MC* #98-354). "By magnifying the brain's impulses, I can transmit my thoughts as dreams in the brain of another person!" The World's Worst Boy tries to kill Freddy with this machine, but is finally thwarted in this nicely illustrated Kurt Schaffenberger story.

1949

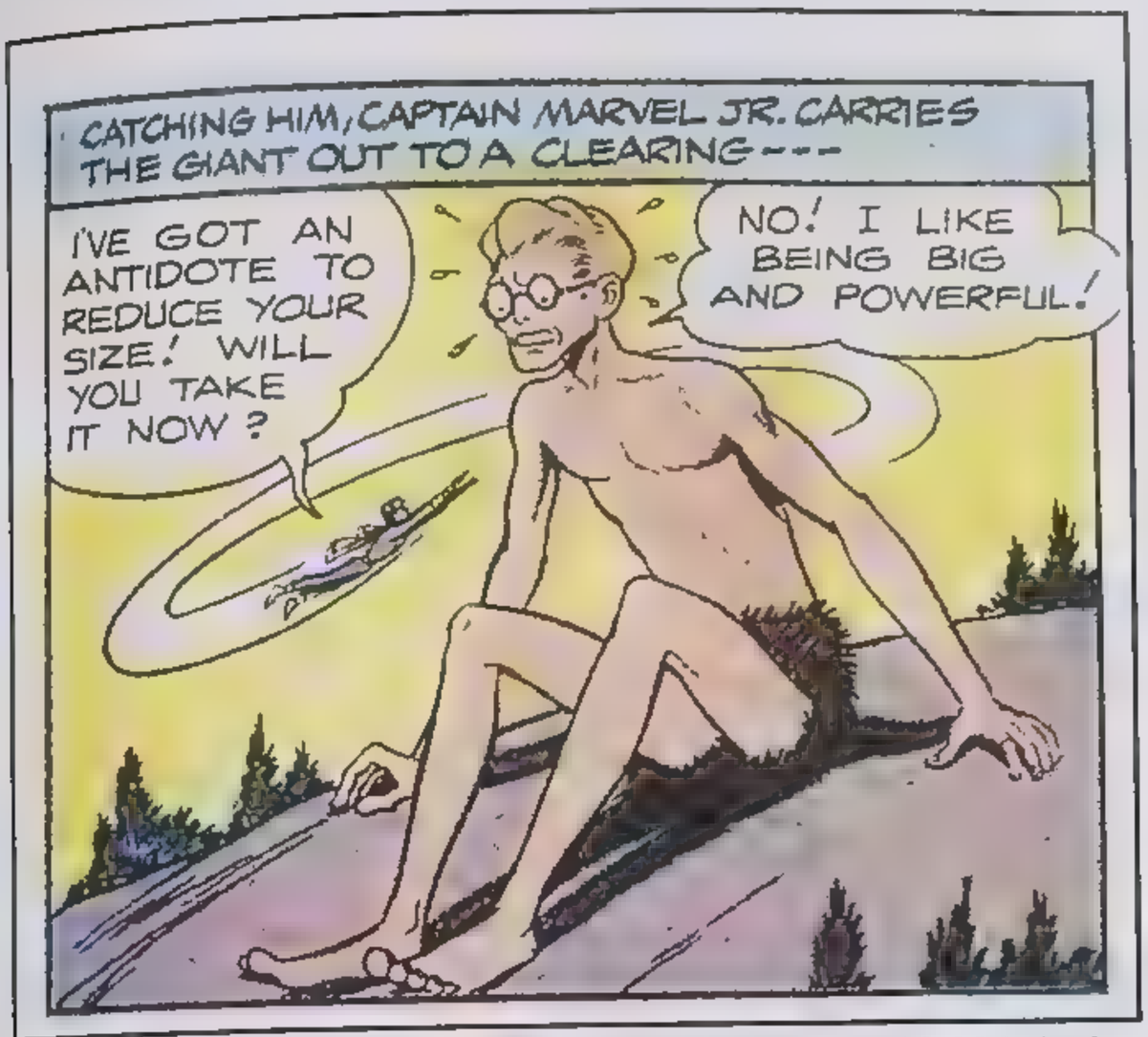
The spring of 1949 provides a story (*MC* #102-378) with a reform attempt of Sivana Jr. by well-intended Farmer Jones. However, Sivana Jr. goes back to his old ways when he uses a plague of locusts to extort money from local farmers. Instead of reforming him, Captain Marvel Jr. provides Sivana Jr. with a quick trip back to reform school. The World's Wickedest Boy comes up with a bigger plot--the stealing of the Statue of Liberty from New York City harbor (*MC* #107-406). He uses the "world's lightest gas" to quickly raise the Statue in the air hiding it in a cloud bank. He wants $150 million for the return of the national monument. Cap Jr. has to halt the rapid descent of the falling monument when Sivana Jr. sends the Statue plunging to the city below. The World's Mightiest Boy saves the symbol of America and captures the World's Wickedest Boy.

1950

In early 1950, Sivana Jr. gets involved in a school play and the theft of valuable jewels in "The Play's the Thing" (*MC* #114-444). The World's Nastiest Boy used a "dog transposer" device to transfer the mind of a dog into Freddy Freeman's body (MC #115-450). His plan is nefarious, "since Freddy loves me like my dog does, he'll do anything I command! I'll order him to murder someone important and then turn him over to the police! He'll get the electric chair for the crime! Heh! Heh!" Late that year Sivana Jr. uses some "green fog" to cover his crimes (*CMJ* #91-482). "Suppose I created a type of fog so thick that they [people] couldn't get out of it! Even Captain Marvel Jr. won't stop me! He can't stop what he can't see!" The



The menacing giant ghost of Sivana Jr's. *CMJ* #99-523. Art by Joe Certa. © 1951, Fawcett Publications.


CATCHING HIM, CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. CARRIES THE GIANT OUT TO A CLEARING---
I'VE GOT AN ANTIDOTE TO REDUCE YOUR SIZE! WILL YOU TAKE IT NOW?
NO! I LIKE BEING BIG AND POWERFUL!

The Blue Boy confronts a giant-sized Sivana Jr. *MC* #93-324. Art by Kurt Schaffenberger. © 1948, Fawcett Publications.

Blue Boy creates eyeglasses that will penetrate the fog, allowing him to find the fog machine and smash it, and then carts Sivana Jr. off to jail.

1951

At the beginning of 1951 Sivana Jr. uses a robot to try to kill Freddy Freeman, but because of the newsboy's kindness to the mechanical man, the latter goes against his master's wishes (*CMJ* #93-492). "Captain Marvel Jr.'s Strange Appetite" (*CMJ* #98-519) has the World's Most Evil Boy injecting apples with an "intense hunger formula" that causes both Freddy and his alter ego to go on an uncontrollable eating binge.

In "The Ghost of Sivana Jr." (*CMJ* #99-523) he projects a giant phantom image of himself, and indeed takes on an almost anti-Christ aura. When he is first thought dead, Cap Jr. thinks, "I haven't caught anything but petty crooks ever since Sivana Jr. disappeared! Was he the evil genius behind most of the world's great crime rings? The nations of the world seem to be getting along better these days! Was Sivana Jr. the one who kept stirring up trouble? The world is a happier place without Sivana Jr. around. People don't seem as worried and nervous as they used to be!"

Captain Marvel Jr.'s centennial issue provides a three-part story entitled "Sivana Jr.'s Cold War" (*CMJ* #100-526, 527, 528) that delivers the wicked boy's greatest challenge to the World's Mightiest Boy. Sivana Jr. causes a global winter that threats the world with a new ice age. Using a radio announcement Sivana Jr. threatens, "Heh-hehhh! Sivana Jr. speaking! Getting cold! It'll get a lot colder unless your leaders agree to make me prince of the universe!" This story is one of the high points of the Blue Boy saga.

1952

In early 1952 the evil boy scientist returns in a time travel story (*CMJ* #105-544) where he travels to 1803 and outbids the Americans for the Louisiana Purchase, claiming the huge slice of land for his own. By legal and monetary technicalities, Cap Jr. invalidates Sivana Jr.'s claims. Sivana Jr. invents a device called the "Sound Scrambler" (*CMJ* #108-554) that disrupts speech communication. Capt. Marvel Jr. then devises a helmet that "insulates against the effect of the electrical scrambler wave."

Once again, Cap Jr's resourcefulness stops the mischief of Sivana Jr. Sivana Jr is successful for a time in making CMJ the "World's Most Unpopular Boy" (*CMJ* #110-561) by having an opinion polling agency rig the questions against the Blue Boy. The outcome is that Captain Marvel Jr. goes into self exile on a tropical island. Sivana Jr. invents a "Dimension Attractor" (*CMJ* #112-570) which he creates his own dimension with so that "even stationary objects will be yanked into my new dimension now!" Cap Jr. again stops Sivana's evil plot and takes him back to reform school. Sivana Jr. reverts to common crime by using hypnotism in his last CMJ 1952 story appearance (*MC* #130-574)

1953

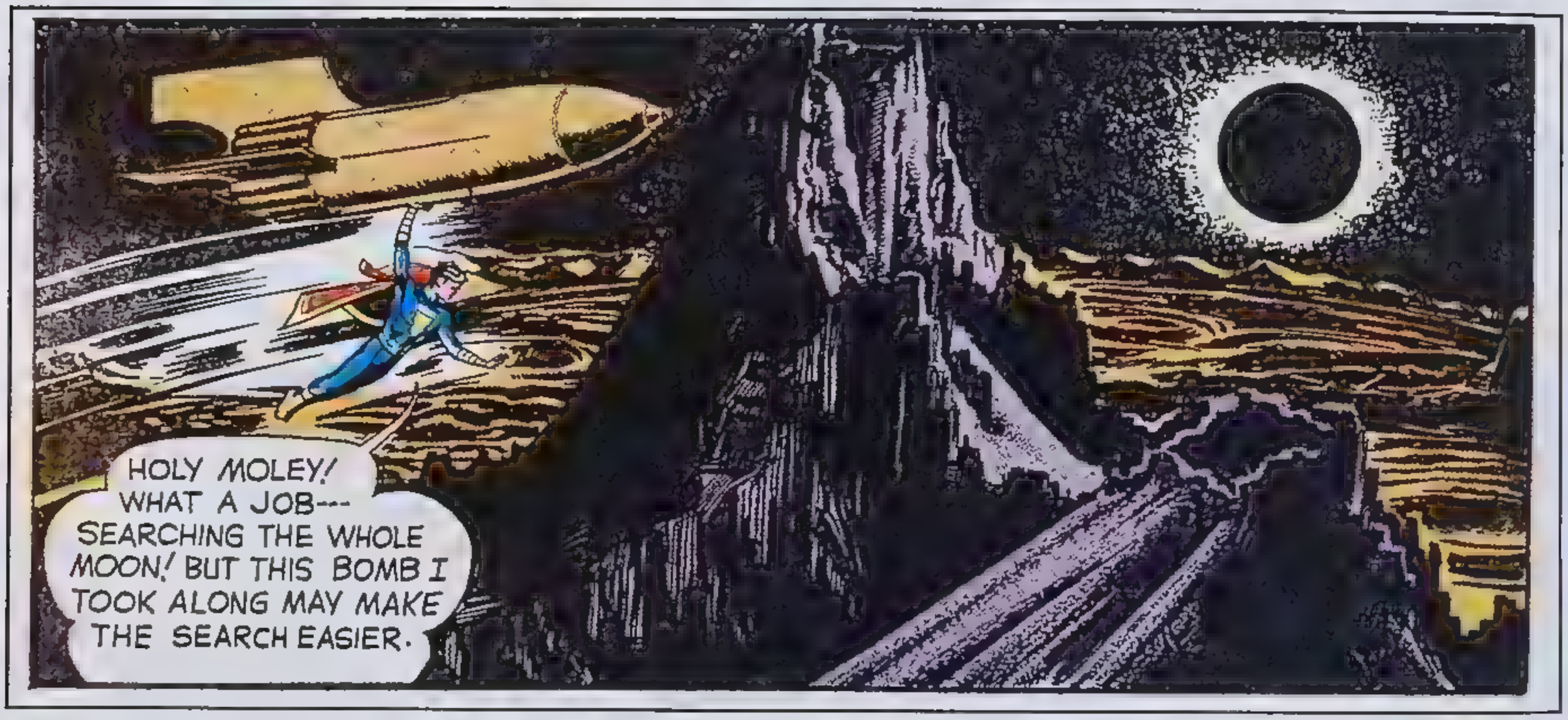
Captain Marvel Jr's last single battle with Sivana Jr. takes place in his own chapter of a Marvel Family story (*MF* #84-598), where the World's Wickedest Boy, the self-proclaimed "Prince of the Sea," heats up the ocean to the boiling point. This story appeared toward the very end of Fawcett's comics publishing tenure. Sivana Jr. would return with the rest of his evil family twenty years later when DC Comics published *Shazam*! #1 (February 1973).

Parting Shots

Sivana Jr. repeatedly escapes from reform school with surprising ease. Sometimes his escapes are shown but most of the time he just shows up to cause more malignant mischief for Cap Jr. Also, even though he is a minor, it seems, that considering the seriousness of some of his crimes, he should be held in a maximum security prison, not a mere reform school. But that is the way of life in the Fawcett universe.

Menaces from Outer Space

The World's Most Powerful Boy was Earth's staunchest defender from threats and invaders from other worlds.



Captain Marvel Jr. dealing with a bombing threat from the Moon. *CMJ* #71-373. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1949, Fawcett Publications.

Captain Marvel Jr. had numerous adventures on other planets or battling outer space aliens and extraterrestrial invasions on Earth. Science fiction writer Otto Binder penned the first 13-page outer space story (*CMJ* #6-41) which begins with meteors crashing on Earth, spreading seeds that rapidly grow into poisonous plants that choke out all other Earth plants. Cap Jr. finds out that the seeds have come from Mars so he flies there and helps Kylar, a resistance leader, defeat the evil King Kull. The meteor shelling of Earth by the Martians is stopped, and back on Earth, The Times newspaper announces, "Martian Menace Over!" In a wild, over- the-top 1943 story (*CMJ* #10-61) involving Nazi military installations on the Moon, huge "Black Blitz" moon-based cannons firing on Earth, and German invasions of both Mars and Venus Captain Marvel Jr. prevails in titanic battles on several planets. Cap Jr. proclaims, "Your Black Blitz flopped, Hitler! And that was your last hope! Keep biting your nails till the day soon when the United Nations march to victory!!"

In a short 1945 August Froelisch drawn story (*CMJ* #28-146), the World's Mightiest Boy brings some rocks from the moon to disprove the claims of Professor J.K.L.M Knotton. Unknowingly, these moon rocks are actually eggs that hatch and grow into very destructive bull/rat/bird-like moon creatures. After defeating the moon monsters, Cap Jr. says to the professor, "That's the last of the monsters, Thank heaven! See what you started with your moon rock business? You nearly wrecked the city!" Later, the Blue Boy concludes, "The papers were kind enough not to mention that he [CMJ] brought the moon monsters too!"

These three early stories seem anomalies

because the vast majority of Captain Marvel Jr. outer space stories happened after 1947. The late 1940s and 1950s were a time of increasing interest in the popular press concerning topics like UFOs and the science fiction-related comics like *Strange Adventures* (1950), *Mystery in Space* (1951), *Weird Science Fiction* (1950), and Fawcett's own short-lived *Captain Video* (1950).[1] In one rather disjointed tale, Sivana Jr. allies himself with a four-armed green cucumber-shaped creature, "Man-from-Mars", who creates a giant flying eye with great hypnotic powers (*MF* #21-305). CMJ deals with both Sivana Jr. and the "Man-from-Mars," taking them to jail and destroying the giant flying Eye by wearing sun glasses so he doesn't get hypnotized.

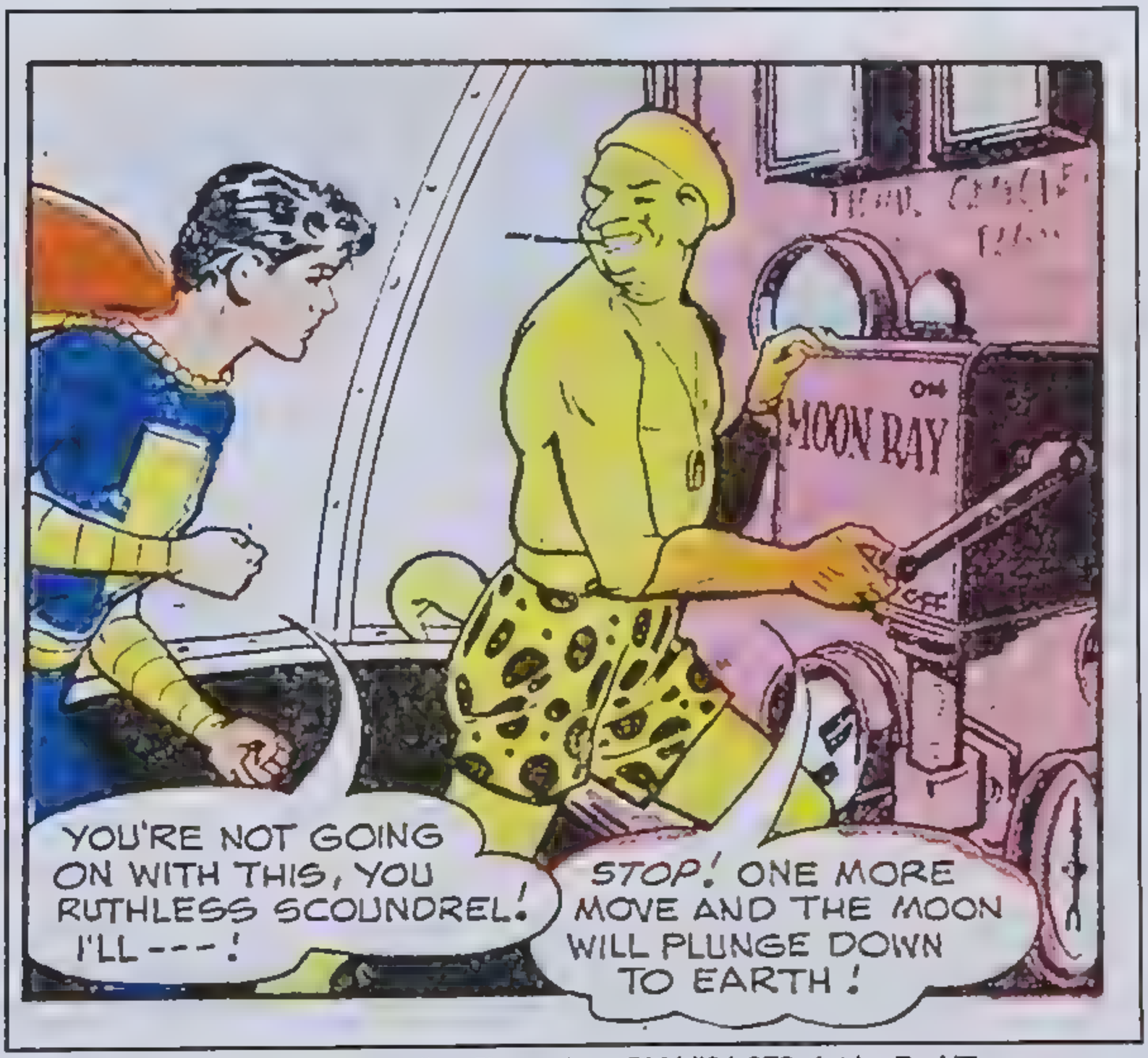
However, the real beginning of this era of space stories happens a month later in the appropriately titled, "The Menace From Space" (*CMJ* #60-307). Cap Jr. hears of a disintegrating ray flashing toward Earth which will destroy the planet in 24 hours. The ray is coming from Gamma Gemini 5000 light years away. CMJ says "I'm going to find out why those people sent the ray!" He flies "faster than light" and arrives at the planet and finds "a giant ray machine." He assaults the popeyed inhabitants but is stopped by an alien before he can destroy the gun. This is a weather control machine and not the cause of the problem. With the right information, the Blue Boy goes to an archaeological dig site and helps the excavation. He uncovers a giant ray machine, and grabbing the machine's barrel, flies toward Earth to use it in deflecting the ray, destroying a meteor instead.

The World's Mightiest Boy, two months later, battles the Space Slavers (*MC* #92-318). In this story, a one-eyed alien captures people from other planets to sell as slaves to the rulers of Jupiter. The Jupiter rulers use these slaves to work in their mines because they can't (or won't) do it themselves. Cap Jr. uses his intelligence and comes up with a solution to the problem and the interstellar slave trade is stopped.

Early in 1949, Captain Marvel Jr. thwarts a plot by moon-based scientists to bomb the Earth (*CMJ* #71-373). Utilizing a different technology from that employed by Hitler and the Nazis six years earlier, they use the Mt. Palomar telescope as a targeting device to aim huge bombs at the Earth. They aim a dummy bomb at Earth to test their weapon. The Blue Boy of Power notes the dummy bomb crash site and calculates its trajectory leading back to the moon. The World's Most Powerful Boy flies to the moon and defeats the scientists and destroys their moonbase.

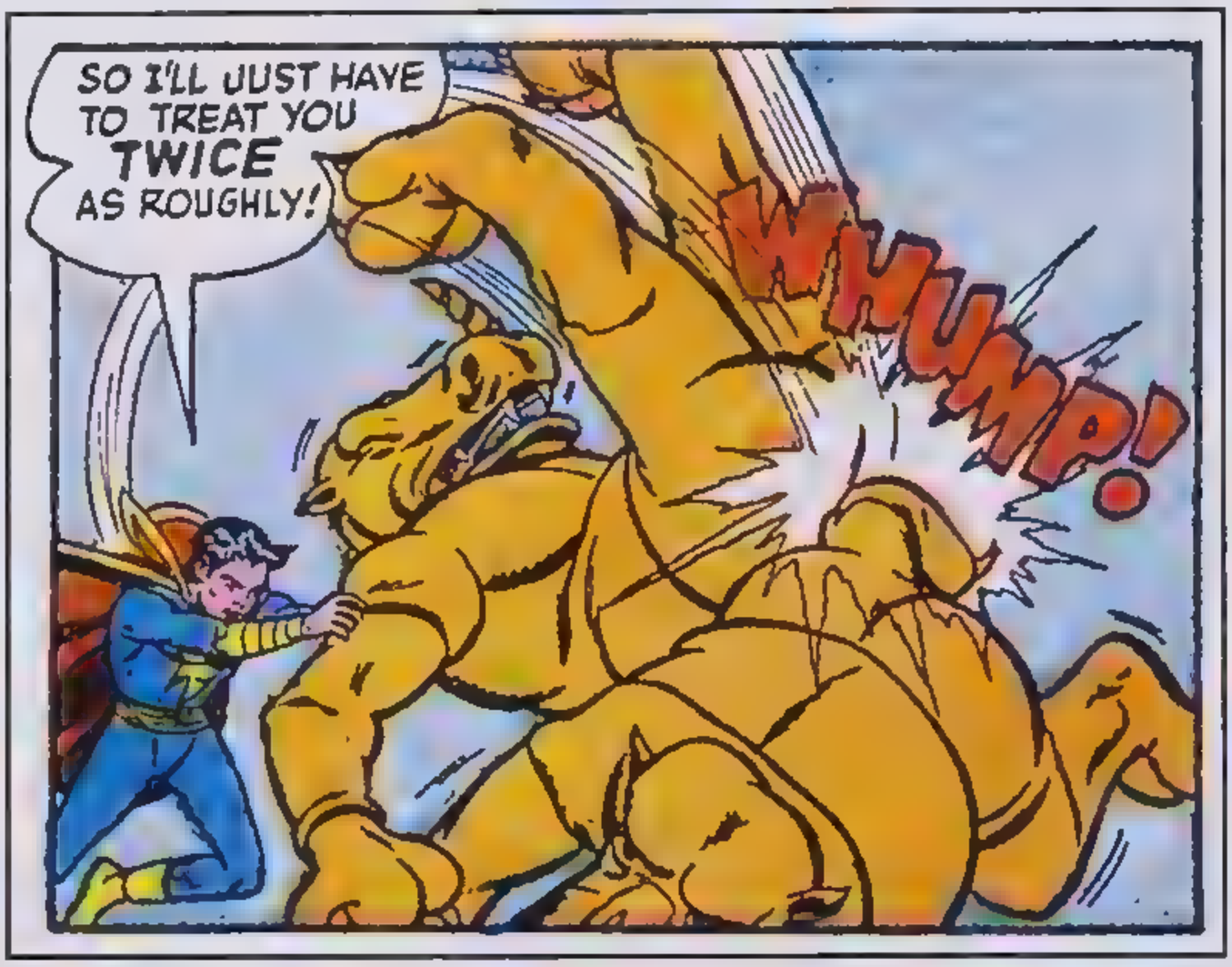
Cap Jr. comes between two warring factions of people who live inside the sun a place of 25 million degree temperatures (*CMJ* #76-401). He tries reasoning with both sides but neither group will listen to his appeals. The Blue Boy grabs a heat cannons from one of the warring opponents and firing it causes a bursting miniature nova with temperatures up to 50 billion degrees. This convinces the two warring sides to sign a peace treaty. Captain Marvel Jr. preaches, "Just remember! All people, anywhere, have a responsibility toward all other people! In carrying on your war, you endangered Earth--and yourselves! Don't forget this ever---War does not pay!" The leaders of the Sun-people rely, "You are right, Blue Boy! Hereafter, we will be known as the United Sun!" Cap Jr.'s warning sounds strikingly like Klaatu's speech at the end of the 1951 film classic, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.

Two months later, a stealth infiltration of Earth begins with aliens who can



Earth's Blue Boy confronts an alien film maker. *CMJ* #84-373. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1950, Fawcett Publications.

change their shapes to look like humans (*CMJ* #78-413). One alien confesses, "Our home world is crowded! We have come to conquer Earth! Five years ago our first space ship landed, and we set up a secret camp in remote hills...! But we are not going to conquer Earth with guns and bombs and military might! You Earthlings are too powerful that way! We are invading another way! By adopting human shape, and mixing with you Earthlings, we can worm our way into all big business, and government, and the Army and the Navy. Hundreds of big important "men" in your world are really us invaders in human disguise! And the best part of it is that you don't know which they are!" In this well-plotted Otto Binder written, story Cap Jr. is presented with a real challenge to defeat this menace.



The World's Most Powerful Boy slams the Silicon Monsters. *CMJ* #92-486. Art by Joe Certa. © 1950 Fawcett Publications.

The Blue Boy struggles against numerous natural calamities in "The Day The World Almost Ended" (*CMJ* #84-445). He finds that these disasters are caused by green-skinned aliens from "a planet of the star Sirius!" They are a motion picture company who are producing a movie on "the end of the world...your Earth!" and use powerful atomic rays to create each natural disaster. The alien movie director wants not only to make the greatest disaster picture but also "to become ruler of my home world!" The aliens attempt to destroy our planet by hurling the moon into the Earth. Cap Jr. sends it back into its proper orbit.

In the summer of 1950, Captain Marvel Jr. stops a swindle by a bunko artist named Harvey Endel who posing as a "Professor Swight" looks for investors and passengers to finance his rocket flight to the moon (*CMJ* #87-462). The World's Mightiest Boy not only ends Endel's scheme, but has to rescue the rocket ship and its passengers from a volcano here on Earth. Space aliens of a decidedly unfriendly sort arrive on Earth with an insatiable appetite for sand. These orange-skinned biped hippo-like Silicon Monsters (*CMJ* #92-486) try to destroy the human inhabitants of Earth with their Snurx bombs. They feed on silicon (a mineral rich in the Earth's crust) and humans would only get in the way. These brutes give the World's Mightiest Boy several good battles before he finds their one weakness.

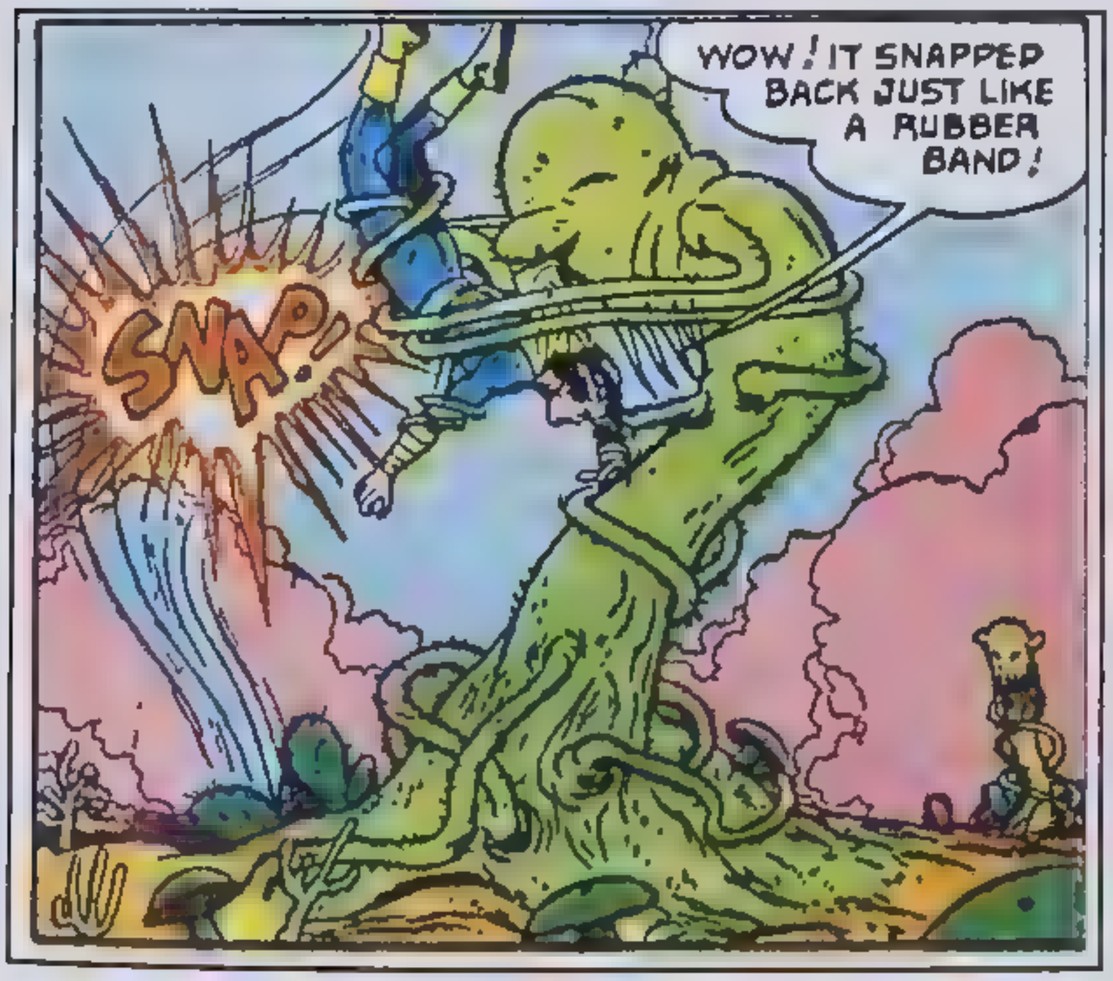
In early 1951 Cap Jr. is called on to stop the menace of the "Cosmic War Dust" that is sweeping across the solar system (*CMJ* #93-491). He flies to Neptune, Saturn and Mars where, by stupendous acts, he helps protect the latter two planet's inhabitants from destroying one another after being infected by the cosmic war dust. The Blue Boy hurries back to Earth and forges a giant horseshoe magnet that attracts the cosmic dust and then he hurls both the magnet and the dust into the sun. However, a few bits of dust gets through and cause the boarders at Mrs. Wagner's home to start fighting each other. This ends when the cosmic dust cloud disappears.

A giant three-eyed intangible space alien who hooks Professor Edgewise and other Earth creatures and objects and presents a real challenge for CMJ. He must use not only his great strength but trickery and wit to solve the problem of "The Space Fisherman" (*CMJ* #95-501). Another space story taking place in the future, where CMJ exhibits his most fabulous strength stunts is, "The Exiled Earth" (*CMJ* #95-503).- [See future article on Time Travel]

Captain Marvel Jr. carries on a running battle with Gol the Space Spy (*CMJ* #97-513). Gol claims to be from a distant star many light years away and his people are going to invade and conquer the Earth. However, Gol is visible only to Cap Jr., and when the Blue Boy tries to warn others of the danger posed by the alien they think he is crazy. After a series of encounters Gol scatters some "explosive pebbles" that blows himself up--taking his own life rather than admitting failure. In the same issue is a five-page fantasy masterpiece called "The Moon on Fire" (*CMJ* #97-516). In this tale a runaway asteroid slams into the moon. A caption reads, "Across the night-bound city a ghastly radiance spreads like a creeping disease...And in the heavens the moon erupts into flame like a second sun!" This causes temperature to soar on the Earth. The World's Most Powerful Boy

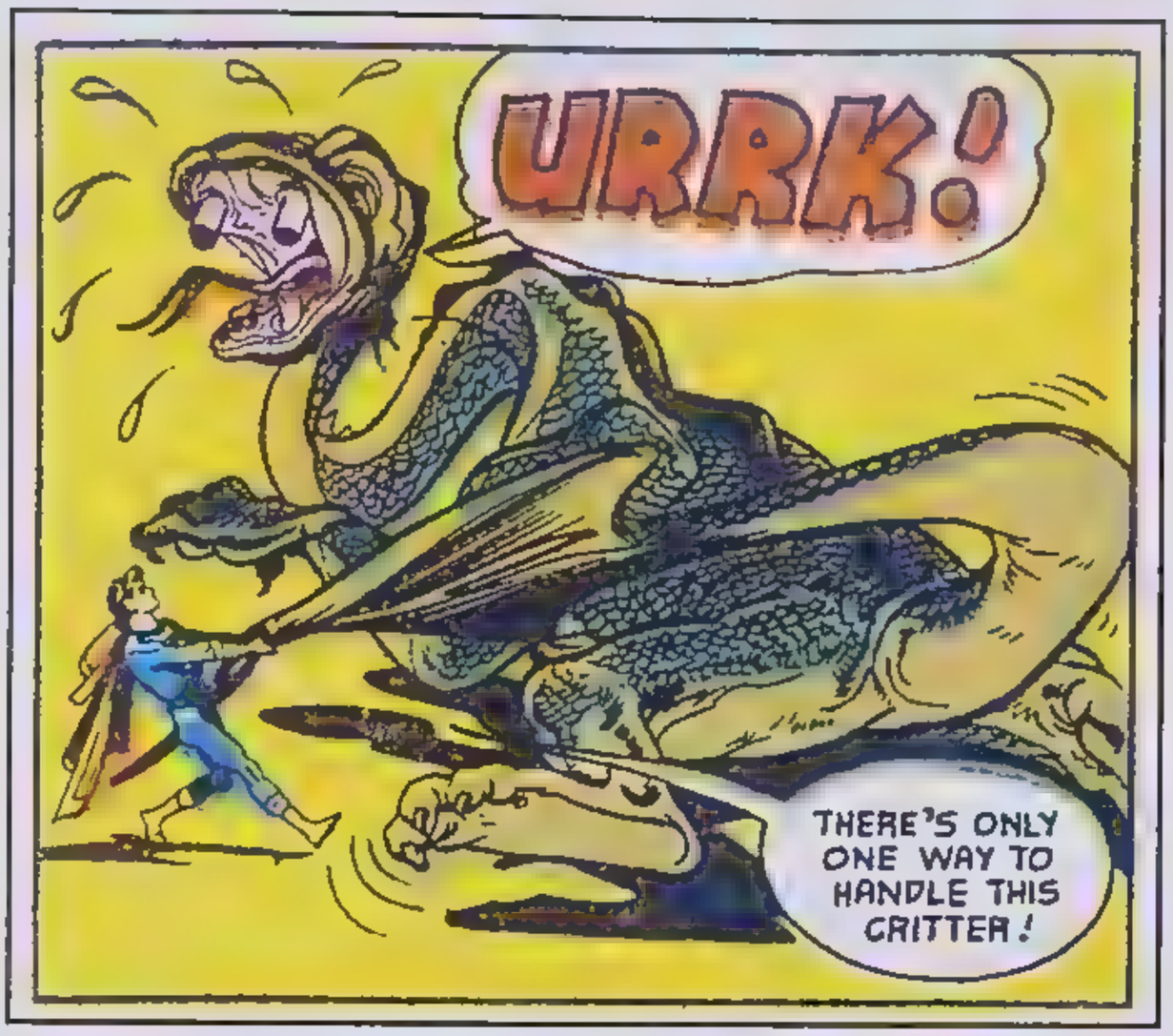
performs one of his god-like strength feats by moving the now blazing moon away from the Earth where in 72 hours the flames go out and "The pull of Earth's gravity will bring the moon back again!" This story presents a real sense of menace and foreboding.

Another finely crafted tale appears in the next issue entitled "The Ark from Space" (*CMJ* #98-520). The story tells of the distant planet, Smorxx, being destroyed by a meteor swarm. Just before the planet's annihilation, Anho gathers two by two all the animals of the planet on a special space ark and escape the doomed planet just before it explodes. They arrive on Earth but find that they and their alien animals are not accepted by humans. Finally, Cap Jr. reconstructs Smorxx, complete with atmosphere and Anho and his creatures return to their home planet. As Capt. Marvel Jr. departs, he says "Earth is a wonderful planet—after all! I'm certainly glad Noah built his ark—or there wouldn't be anybody there for me to go home to!"



The World's Mightiest Boy caught by Martian plant creatures. *CMJ* #93-491. Art by Joe Certa. © 1951 Fawcett Publications.

Cap Jr. travels to a sea world beyond our solar system where he encounters the descendants of a group of ancient Egyptians led there thousands of years ago by the scientist Pharaoh Re-Tap (*CMJ* #101-529). "Pharaoh Re-Tap...invented a propulsion system to carry this vessel through space! And he invented a protective coating to keep the cold of space from getting in!" They lost the ability to fly away from the sea world. Even though Cap Jr. helps them re-invent the propulsion system, the people decide to stay on the sea planet (now their home) because "We've become adjusted to this type of atmosphere!"



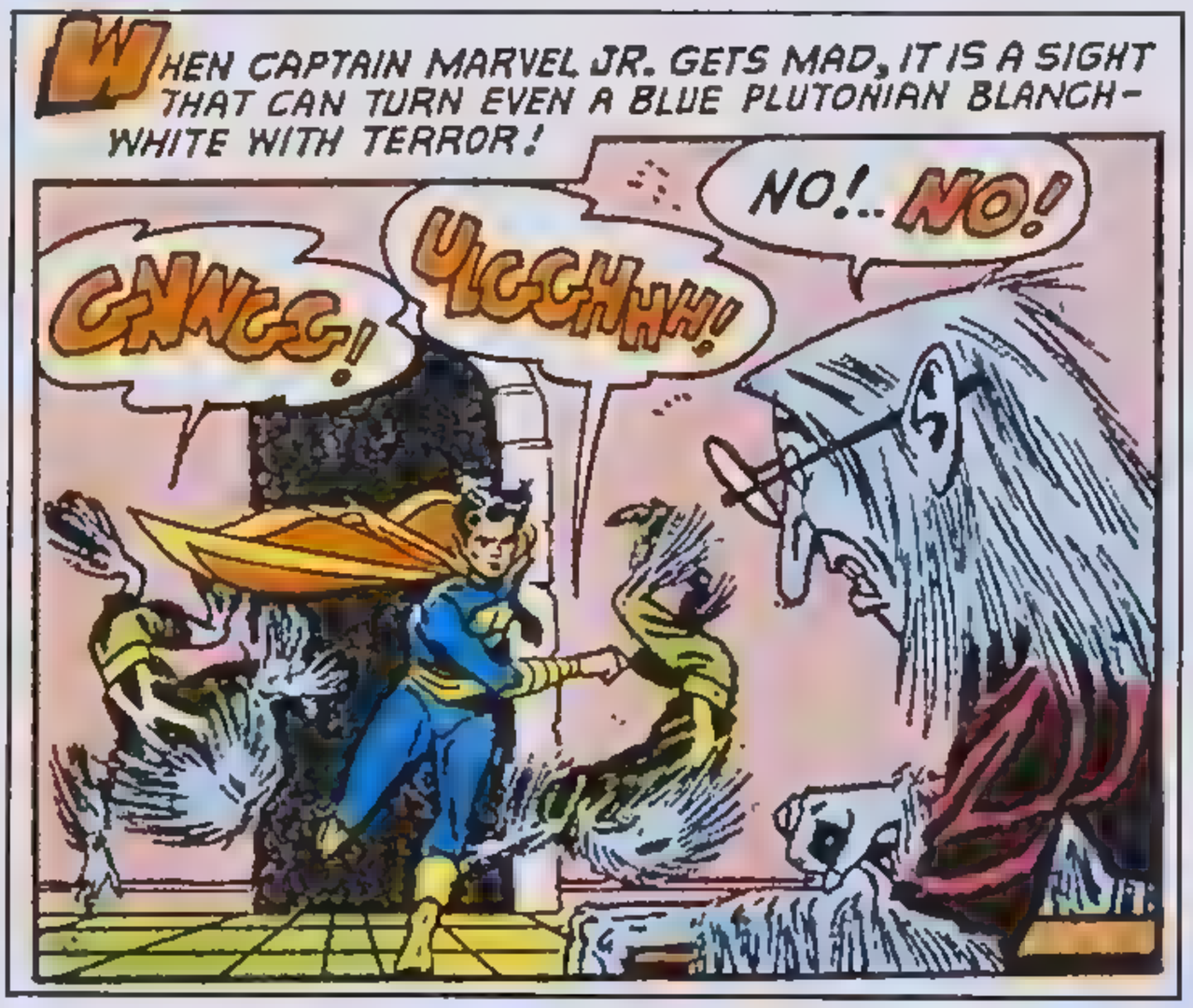
CapJr. yanks the tail of a Space Dragon on a far off world. *CMJ* #102-534. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1950 Fawcett Publications.

On a faraway planet, a humanoid inhabitant named Googla makes a speech in front of a "Liars' Club" where he talks about his visit to Earth (*CMJ* #102-534). He mentions he discovered (and filmed) a flying Blue Boy whose body repelled bullets. This boy, Cap Jr., also performed amazing feats of strength and rescue (holding up bridges, flying large passenger ships out of danger). However while he is telling this at a Liars' Club he is actually telling the truth. Cap Jr. comes to the planet in time to save it from a giant dragon-like monster called the "Great Horror", which he films while doing the feat. CMJ then returns the Liars' movie camera to Googla and Liars' Club, judges realize that Googla, was telling the truth. Googla forfeits the prize but the judges give him another prize, "for getting rid of the monster through Captain Marvel Jr."

1952 continues the series of stories dealing with catastrophic dangers from outer space. CMJ tackles the Space Master who threatens to destroy the Earth (*CMJ* #105-543). "Surrender or Perish!" is the message written in the stars that the inhabitants of Mrs. Wagner's Boarding House see one night. "The Space Master will destroy Earth in a vast interplanetary collision! He must control a tremendous power of magnetic repulsion to force planets into motion!" This gives Cap Jr. an idea "But it could be magnetic attraction! In that case, the source of the magnetism would be right here on Earth! And it would be drawing the planets toward us!" The inventive Blue Boy uses a magnetic tracker to find the Space Master, who turns out to be a mad scientist from Earth.

William Woolfolk penned another threat of cosmic proportions about a giant

alien being named Yblees (*CMJ* #109-557) who destroyed a planet in Galaxy 717 killing "hundreds of million of innocent beings..." Yblees threatens to do the same to the Earth. Yblees uses a huge mirror to concentrate the Sun's rays to fry the Earth. After a titanic struggle which pits CMJ's powers with the giant alien he knocks Yblees into the rays path which destroys the alien. This menace is somewhat similar to the 1966 Galactus saga in the *Fantastic Four*) as Galactus and Yblees were both giant outer space beings threatening to destroy the Earth. The Blue Boy is next appointed by the United Nations as ambassador to the planet Pluto after the World's Mightiest Boy destroys a gigantic icicle hurling toward Earth from the distant world (*CMJ* #111-564). He finds that Pluto is dominated by evil warlords who rule over a restive population. Cap Jr. leads a revolt which forces democracy on the rulers. This story has a similar plot to "CMJ Battles on Another World" (*CMJ* #6-41) published nine years earlier in 1943.


WHEN CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. GETS MAD, IT IS A SIGHT THAT CAN TURN EVEN A BLUE PLUTONIAN BLANCH-WHITE WITH TERROR!
GNNGG!
ULGGHHH!
NO!.. NO!
Captain Marvel Jr. gets mad at blue skinned, one-eyed Plutonians. *CMJ* #111-564. Art by Joe Certa. © 1952 Fawcett Publications.

The World's Most Powerful Boy deals with a challenge from the planet Jupiter (CMJ *#114-575*). The Jupiter inhabitants—giant, one-eyed bipeds—are a bored race. They greatly desire amusement and find it by taking living beings from other worlds as novelties for exhibits in their great museum. While on a train trip with LeRoy Marks, Freddy Freeman and an entire trainload of passengers are high-jacked in a gigantic sleeve cylinder and transported to Jupiter. There the Blue Boy of Power uses his wits to see that, after some conflict, the train is returned safely to Earth with all of its passengers.

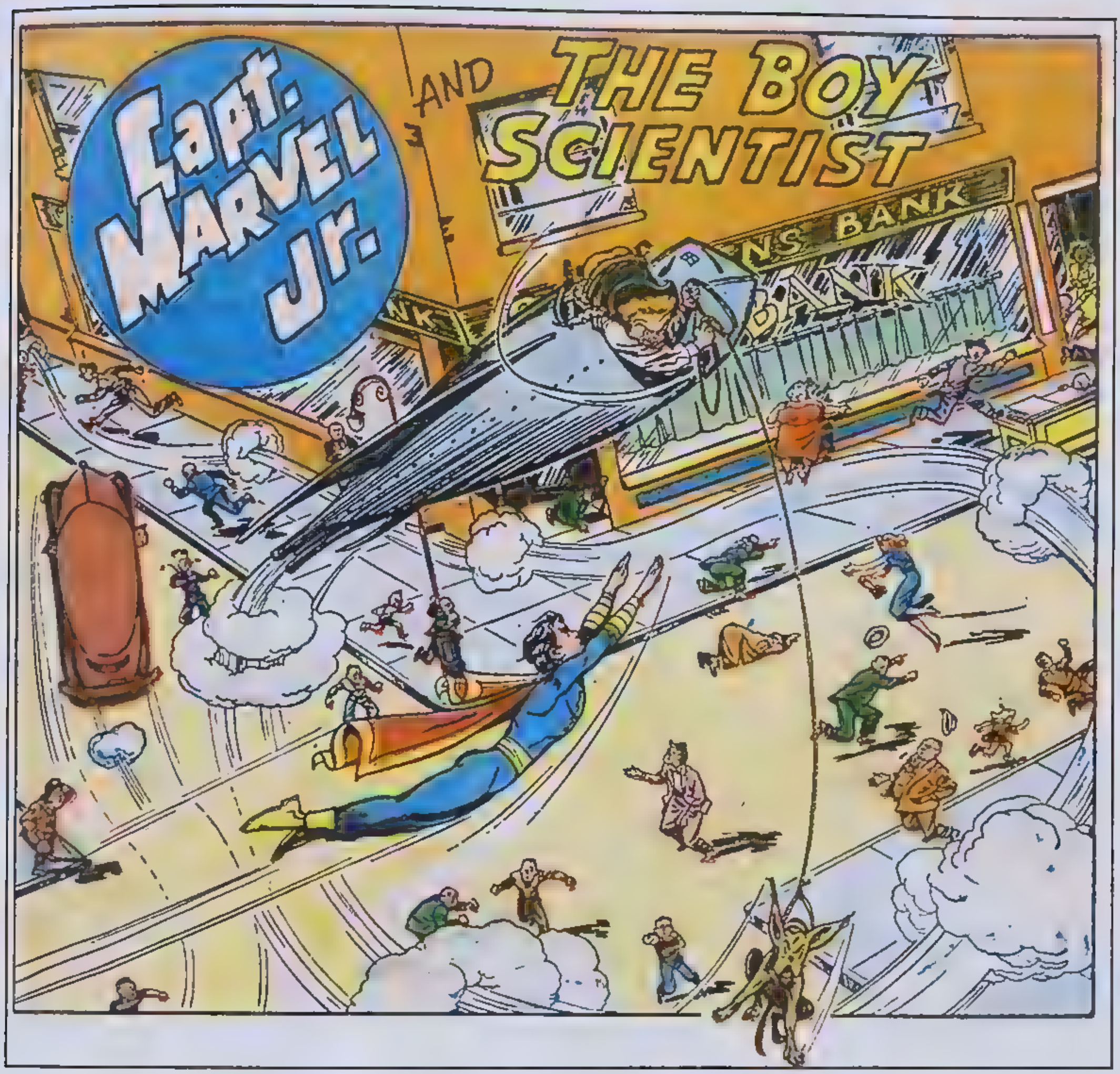
Certainly one of the more bizarre Captain Marvel Jr. stories is "The Thousand Eyed Idol of Doom" (*CMJ* #115 -579), where a huge eye (initially thought to be a flying saucer) puts Freddy into a deep hypnotic trance that simulates death. LeRoy Marks comes in (the huge Eye retreats unseen), finds Freddy in bed, and believes he has died. Later the Boarding House folks attend Freddy's funeral but the giant Eye takes off with Freddy's body. The huge Evil Eye transports Freddy to his planet filled with creatures like itself, where it rants, "I intend to conquer and destroy your Earth! My eyes will destroy you!" However, a revived Freddy calls on Cap Jr. and the huge ruler runs off a cliff and plunges to his death. Bud Thompson's excellent artwork gives this tale a genuinely eerie and creepy feel.

Published about the time of the 1952 Presidential election is a tale involving a pro-war candidate named B. A. Niatram (*CMJ* #116-582). Niatram (Martian spelled backwards) turns out to be a "Manchurian Candidate" who is secretly a Martian. Freddy realizes, "Once the Martians elect their own president, they'll lead the country to war! Most of Earth's people will be destroyed in such a war--and the Martians will take control of Earth!" After CMJ foils the plot, Freddy concludes, "Another election is over, folks! Whatever political party you belong to, at least we can all be glad we elected an Earthman, instead of a Martian!" Oddly, the disguised Niatram resembles the well-liked ("I Like Ike") Dwight D. Eisenhower who won the 1952 Presidential election.

Early in 1953, Red O'Riley (a ham radio operator) tells Freddy Freeman he has made contact with "a space ship that's approaching Earth!" After several failed attempts to find the space ship from the planet Elluria, Captain Marvel Jr. rightly reasons that the space ship is tiny and that they are intelligent beetle-like insects who have crash landed in Red O'Riley's window box (*CMJ* #117 -586). Later, Freddy holds the newspaper with headlines reading, "Space Insects Get New Home in Museum," while exclaiming "We're trying our best to make them feel welcome here on Earth, folks! One thing's for sure! They won't need much room!"

These creature tales from outer space both reflected the times when they were published and were a herald of more (much more) to come in the latter part of the 1950s and 1960s, when so many comic book stories were obsessed with this theme.[1]

[1] For more discussion of this era see Mike Benton, *The Illustrated History of Science Fiction Comics*, 1992, pp. 35-77.



The Boy Stories

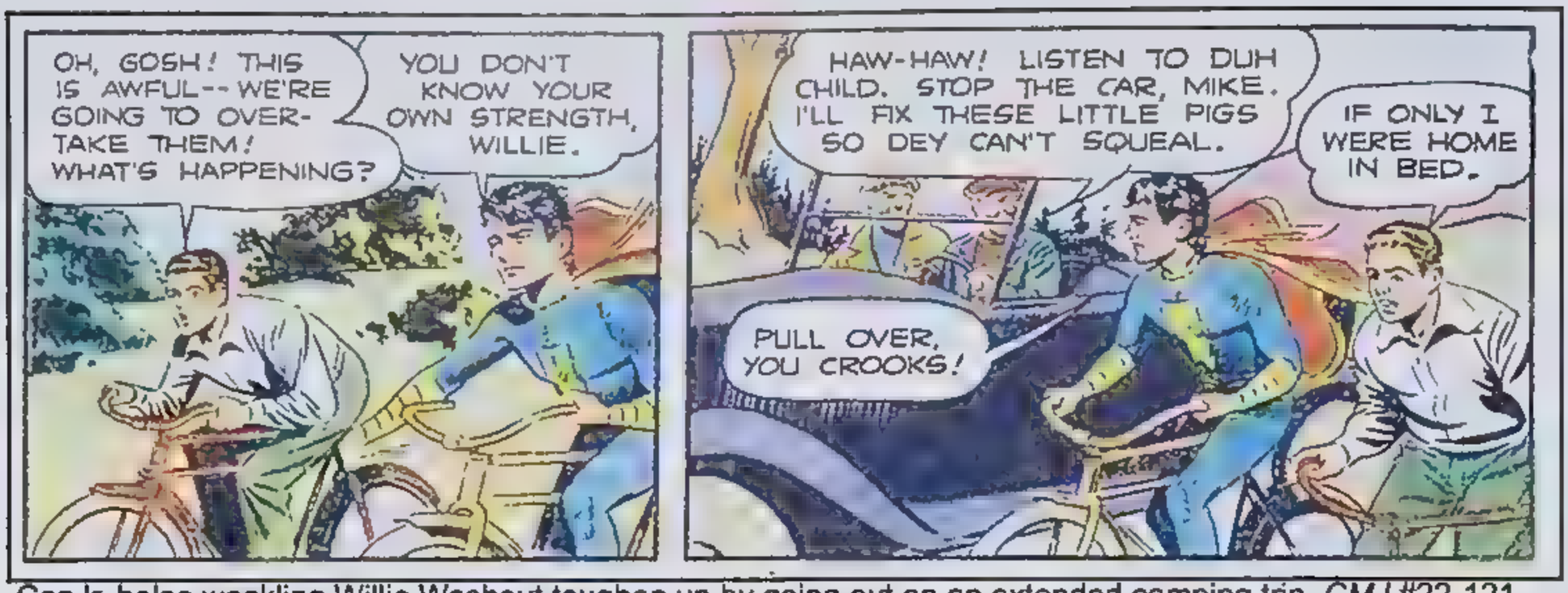
One of the grand themes within Captain Marvel Jr. stories was tales showing how the World's Mightiest Boy helped boys his own age and younger.

Captain Marvel Jr. was a comic book hero aimed at males--mainly 10- to 15 year-old boys. While the Big Red Cheese, Captain Marvel, was the ultimate big brother and even perhaps a surrogate father figure, the World's Mightiest Boy was a brother close to most reader's own age (a true buddy) and he could even be yourself. Captain Marvel Jr. was a boy himself! The theme of helping boys in distress and trouble was a common thread which wove itself throughout the current of the Fawcett years. In some ways, these stories are ones that make the strongest moral statements out of the hundreds of Cap Jr. stories published during the 1940s and 1950s.

Freddy Freeman and Captain Marvel Jr. help out another crippled boy (named Willy) stop the cruel and illegal use of crippled children at the Cheer Lodge (*MC* #32-12). The home managers, Dr. Krool and Professor Swype, use the young disabled children to commit crimes against their will. Freddy and Cap Jr. get legal documents showing the illegalities of the home owners. This story could have been taken out of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

Shot by the police, dying criminal, Trigger Hogan, admonishes his son to

Above art: CapJr. prevents boy genius Leon Tinker from hurting himself. *CMJ* #72-381. Art by Joe Certa. © 1949 Fawcett Publications.


OH, GOSH! THIS IS AWFUL--WE'RE GOING TO OVER-TAKE THEM! WHAT'S HAPPENING?
YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR OWN STRENGTH, WILLIE.
HAW-HAW! LISTEN TO DUH CHILD. STOP THE CAR, MIKE. I'LL FIX THESE LITTLE PIGS SO DEY CAN'T SQUEAL.
IF ONLY I WERE HOME IN BED.
PULL OVER, YOU CROOKS!

CapJr. helps weakling Willie Washout toughen up by going out on an extended camping trip. *CMJ* #22-121. © 1944 Fawcett Publications.

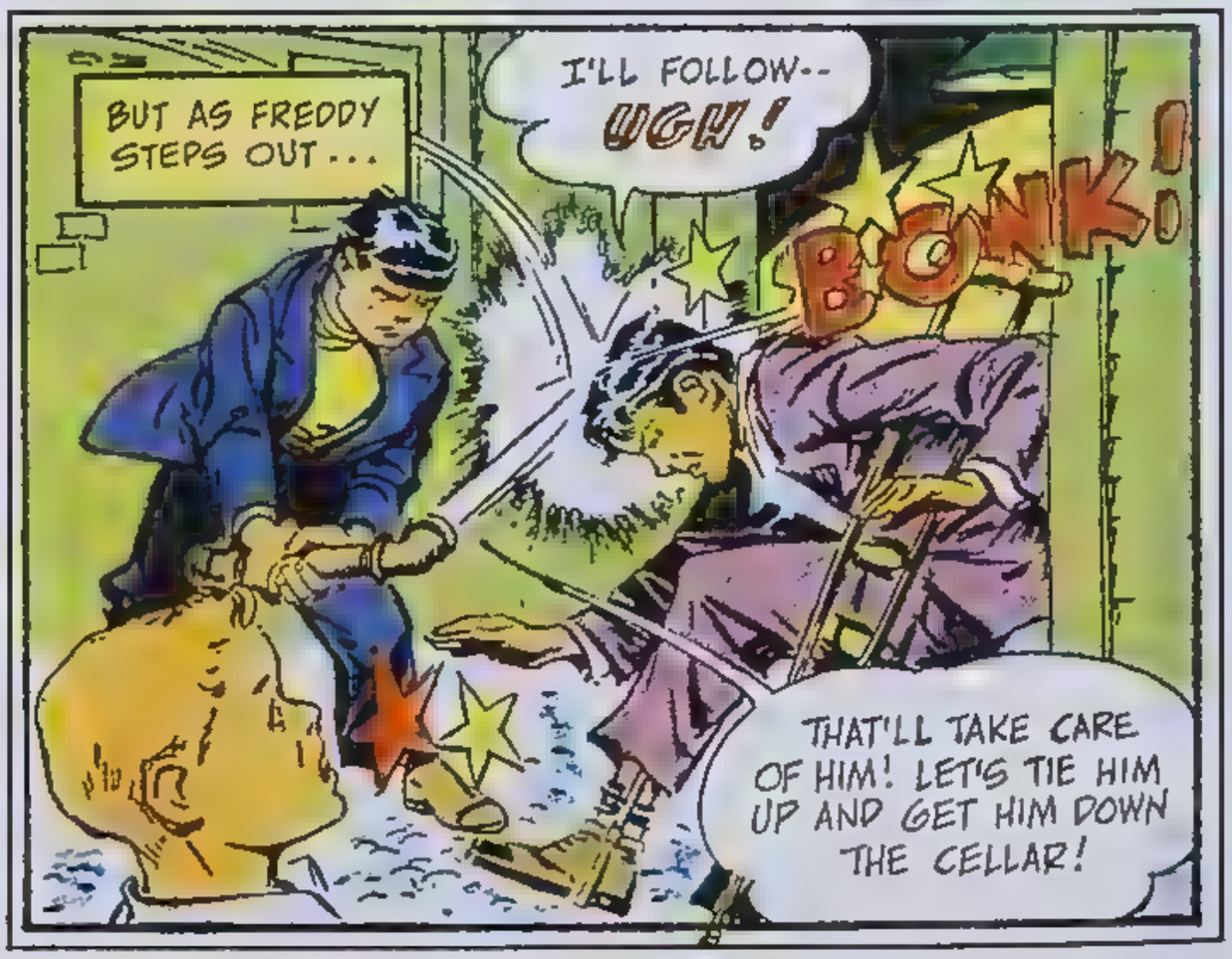
go straight and avoid his fate (*MC* #35-28). Young Danny Hogan disregards his father's advice and plans revenge. Freddy Freeman encourages Danny to take a job as a newsboy, but he refuses, makes a colorful costume, and takes over the leadership (as the Jolly Roger) of his father's old gang. After confrontations with the World's Mightiest Boy, who spanks the errant lad, Danny decides not to pursue a life of crime. This is a fine, uncomplicated story with excellent Mac Raboy art. Freddy and the Blue Boy help out a young girl and her grandfather (friends of Freddy) who are being used by Nazis to offload supplies and ammunition near a small New England fishing village in the "Black Grotto," another early story drawn by Mac Raboy (*MC* #37-39). Cap Jr. takes two young boys to experience the Battle of Stalingard in a late 1943 story (*MC* #43-70).

Freddy and Cap Jr. help another young crippled boy named Jimmy Carter regain the use of his legs (*CMJ* #17-98). Freddy finds a special dollar coin that is inscribed with "Whosoever finds me shall be an invisible knight, but his good deeds shall be visible!" During the Bronco rides (at a rodeo), Don Carter, Jimmy's brother, gets thrown off and is about to be trampled when Freddy calls for Cap Jr., who invisibly saves and takes Don to the First Aid tent. Freddy returns to Jimmy with news that his brother is all right but the boy is skeptical. Freddy calls on Cap Jr. who grabs Jimmy, placing him on the bronc. The invisible Blue Boy guides him into steer wrestling and riding the bronco Thunderbolt. Later, Jimmy realizes he is walking without his crutches. The doctor explains, "Of course! The excitement of winning the saddle did it...the happy shock cured him!" Freddy's parting comment, "That's the visible good deed come true...A crippled boy walking again! I wonder if Freddy Freeman will ever walk again...well, I can't complain as long as I can say the magic words!"

Freddy Freeman sees a newspaper ad requesting Captain Marvel Jr. as a guardian for the son of wealthy W.L. Peasly (*MC* #53-119). Cap Jr. decides to accept the invitation, and the impish boy, Pierpoint, plays several practical jokes which exasperates the Blue Boy. However, the World's Mightiest Boy realizes some of the boy's stunts are "ingenious contrivances." He says, "Whether the kid knows it or not, he's a young genius!" At the end of the story, after a bout with two burglars Pierpoint deals with the crooks, who tells his father, "No, Dad! Captain Marvel Jr. wants me to make a lot more useful inventions for him and for Captain Midnight too! I'll be too busy to be anything but a genius! Oh boy!"

Freddy Freeman (and Captain Marvel Jr.) helps one of his classmates, Willie Washout, become strong and more self-reliant by taking him on a hostel trip (*CMJ* #22-121). The Blue Boy reasons with his parents, "Hostels are clean and cheap accommodations scattered throughout the country for biking and hiking kids. An ideal experience for Willie." With the parents' approval, the Blue Boy spends several weeks of vigorous physical activity with Willie building him up physically and emotionally. The story concludes with Willie taking out some crooks without the help of Cap Jr.

Willie returns two issues later as a Civil Air Patrol pilot who has to parachute out of his plane after it is rammed by Professor Vultur's killer birds (*CMJ* #24-128). The Blue Boy saves Willie from being thrown off the top of a chateau and ends up with a medal for heroism. Young Johnny Rogers



Freddy Freeman gets bashed while trying to investigate two bad boys. *CMJ* #40-193. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1946 Fawcett Publications.

comes to the defense of Freddy Freeman ("He's an old pal of our family,...) who the police suspect as being a lookout for a vicious gang of car thieves in "The Hot Short Gang!" (*CMJ* #25-133). CapJr. in return helps Johnny when he unknowingly aids wartime racketeers with his auto mechanic skills. Captain Marvel Jr. and Freddy Freeman try to help a boy named Danny but it is all a ruse by Dr. Sivana (*MC* #57-135). Sivana had perfected a pill that can instantly change him into a boy, but after several changes the Blue Boy of Power catches on and captures the wily wicked scientist.

Freddy Freeman gets looks on as his look-a-like Prince William is crowned King of small European kingdom. *CMJ* #46-227. Art by Bud Thompson. © 1947 Fawcett Publications.

Post War

The boy king, Denis III of Bengaria wishes he had the powers of Captain Marvel Jr. (*MC* #67-175). Through a series of misadventures, including a plot against the throne, the Blue Boy exclaims, "My diplomacy sure was a flop! Hereafter I'll stick to things I know more about." The king comments, "And I'll do the same! Being a good king is enough for me without trying to do your job as well." Dick Sanders is a 15-year-old boy whom Cap Jr. rescues from driving a runaway fire truck (*CMJ* #40-192). The World's Mightiest Boy learns that Dick drank a liquid, made by his deceased scientist father, that could stop the aging process. He despairs about being stuck in a boy's body for the rest of his life. After a series of harrowing dangers, with the help of Dr. Witz, an antidote is made that stimulates Dick's aging process.

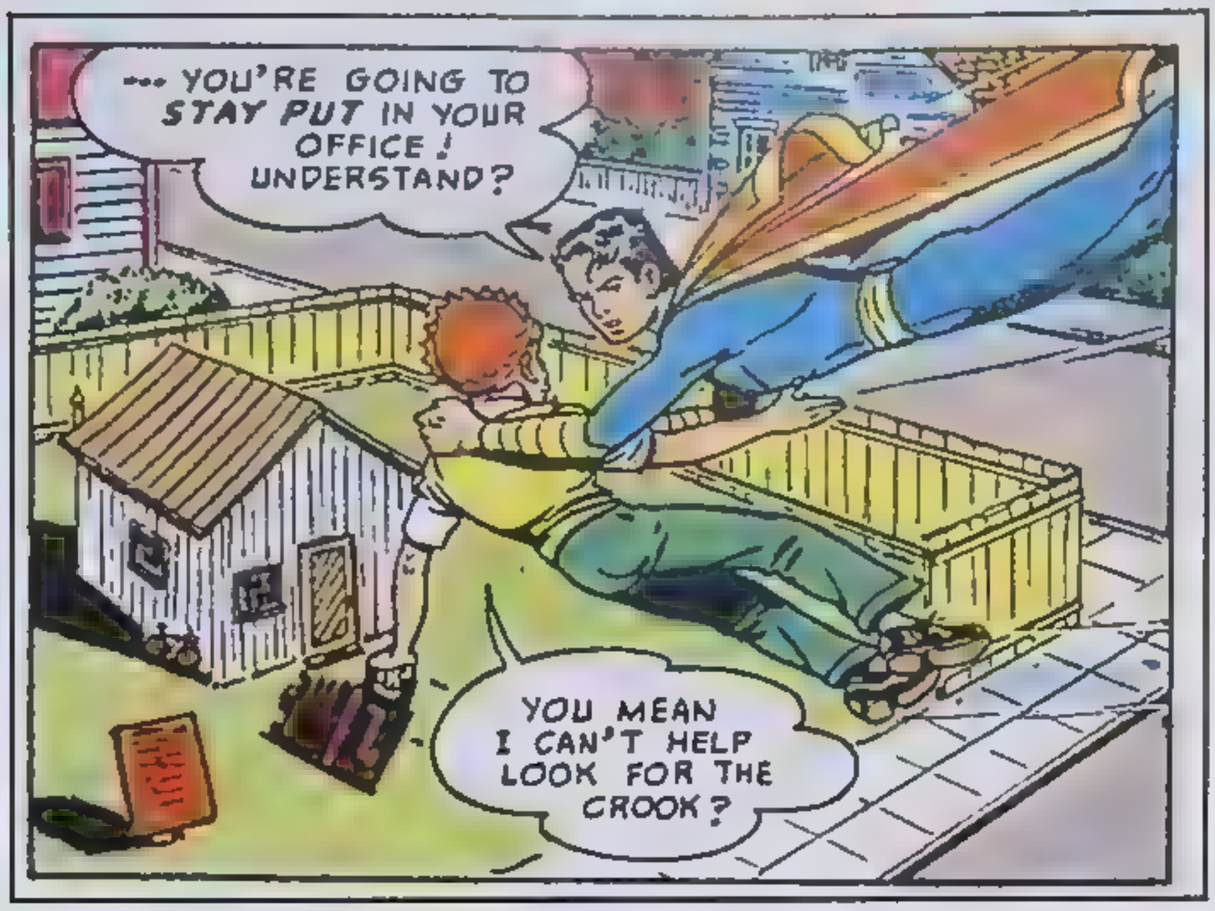
After the Blue Boy rescues a boy from falling down a manhole in the street, the school principal tells Cap Jr. that he needs $4000 to make a school playground (*CMJ* #40-193). The mighty Blue Boy helps raise the money but it is stolen by two bad boys. They want to get revenge on the principal by purchasing a $4000 car in the principal's name in order to frame him. Freddy finds out about the plot, and Capt. Marvel Jr. brings the boys to justice and saves the principal's reputation.

On vacation at Little Acres, the home town of Farmer Jones, Freddy Freeman sees a young boy named Tuffy about to be run over by an onrushing train. Freddy shouts for the World's Mightiest Boy who rescues the lad (*MC* #76-225). Tuffy then goes an tells his friends at the "Never-lie-Club" he met Cap Jr. but they think he is lying and kick him out of the club. The club meets in a dugout cave under Farmer Jones' field, but the farmer decides to fill in the hole to the Club entrance not knowing the boys are in the cave. Cap Jr. and Tuffy arrive in time for the World's Mightiest Boy to rescue the lads. The youngsters then proclaim Tuffy club president when they realize he was telling the truth.

Freddy Freeman is kidnapped and taken by plane to a small European kingdom (*CMJ* #46-227). His abductors explain that he looks just like their missing young crippled prince and want to use him to substitute for the prince at the coronation. After some court intrigue, the Blue Boy of Power exposes the plots of Duke Wade and finds the prince. Later, Freddy gets to witness the coronation of King William (the first time that has happened). This story has elements from Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper.*

Cap Jr. helps a boy named Peanuts who plants some magic beans that sprout into a huge beanstalk that reaches into the clouds to the home of a giant (*CMJ* #47-234). This is a retelling of the fairy tale "Jack and the Bean Stalk". Freddy Freeman and CMJ help bring about change in the attitude of a spoiled rich boy in "The UnAmerican Way" (*CMJ* #48-239). The Blue Boy helps another newsboy named Tuffy (apparently not the same one in *MC* #76-225) win a golf tournament to pay for college tuition (*CMJ* #48-241). [Read future issues of ***Blue Boy Chronicles*** for Fairy Stories, Personal Transformation, Sports articles for more details.]

Young Lamont Crane, in order to gain his inheritance, receives aid from Freddy Freeman and Captain Marvel Jr. on voyage around the tip of South America in a high seas adventure (MC #81-253). [An article on Pirate Stories will deal with this story in a future issue of the ***Blue Boy Chronicles***]. The World's Mightiest Boy becomes involved in witness protection for a young college student named Speedy (*MC* #85-276). Speedy is the only eyewitness to a murder by Slojin Rickey, a notorious killer. This story takes place on a college campus and involves student intiation rites which almost causes a serious accident.



The Blue Boy helps boy publisher Inky Davis stay out of trouble. *CMJ* #84-446. Art by Joe Certa. © 1950 Fawcett Publications.

A teenage hangout - the malt shop with young teen characters that could have been out of Archie Comics is featured in "The Strange Case of the Blue Boy's Black Eye" (*CMJ* #56-285). Braggy, a boastful teen boy, says he can give the World's Most Powerful Boy a black eye. Several murderous crooks become involved and force Braggy to find where the World's Mightiest Boy lives. After Cap Jr. saves Braggy from the crooks, the boy announces, "Well, I'm reformed! Captain Marvel, Jr. taught me that bragging doesn't pay!" Freddy closes, "That's right! Actions speak louder than words!"

Crook Take-A-Chance McGinty shows his partners a newspaper story about Homer Huddle, the world's most brilliant boy, who is arriving in town that day (*CMJ* #58-296). The boy is kidnapped in order to work out an anagram contest the crook had entered. Cap Jr. rescues the genius boy by a coded message Freddy notes in a local store. Freddy Freeman takes Mrs Wagner to a concert of a great boy violinist John Fidler (*CMJ* #59-302). The young musician is unhappy with his life and runs away. After several adventures, Freddy and the Blue Boy, talk sense into the youth who needs clear direction. Freddy Freeman walks in a forest and discovers a painting on a birch tree, and a hermit boy claims to be the artist (*CMJ* #59-304). After a series of adventures with a crooked art dealer Cap Jr. persuades the "Boy Hermit" to live in the city, where he becomes a successful artist.

Cap Jr. helps newsboy Johnny Fowler stop a slave chain gang using child labor to mine gold by crooked Warden Scrunch who uses a reform school as a cover (*CMJ* #61-316). In a rather complex plot, Freddy Freeman is abducted by two kidnappers. Fred looks just like Chauncey Smythe II, who has disappeared (*CMJ* #68-355). The crooks want to use the unconscious Freddy to get reward money from Chauncey Smythe's father. Freddy later awakens and calls on Cap Jr., who ultimately captures the crooks and finds the rich boy. The Blue Boy appeals to the state governor to shut down the operation.

The World's Mightiest Boy plays nursemaid to a ten-year-old boy genius. Leon Tinker has a knack for inventing potentially dangerous devices (*CMJ* #72-381). It is a fun story without criminals or world-conquering villains but with a little boy whose lack of good sense is far outstripped by his inventive genius, Cap Jr. admits, "That kid gives me an inferiority complex!" and "Can't that boy scientist invent anything but dangerous gadgets! I'll be a nervous wreck if he keeps it up!" A young boy orphaned in the wilds of the African jungle is adopted and raised by a lioness (*CMJ* #81-431). Years later, as King Kirzo he is about to feed explorer Ellis Chalmers and his native guides to some lions when Cap Jr. intervenes. Chalmers is Kirzo's uncle. They take the wild boy back to civilization where, after a confrontation with a zoo gorilla, (Cap Jr. intervenes). the young man adapts well to civilized life and becomes President of the Be Kind to Animals Association.

1950s

Inky Davis is a young boy who is editor of his own newspaper, Boy Bugle. He is so intent on getting major news stories for his paper that he almost gets himself killed or severely injured doing so (*CMJ* #84-446). Only by the timely rescues from The World's Mightiest Boy does the boy newspaper editor survive. His last rescue by Cap Jr. is from a bandit whose identity he was going to reveal in the newspaper. Inky finally learns his lesson, "No, it wasn't so clever! I nearly got killed again--except for you, Captain Marvel, Jr! I've learned my lesson! I won't chase after big news anymore!" Freddy holding a copy of the Boy Bugle with the headline "Captain Marvel Jr. Bags Bandit," he sums up, "Well, anyhow, Inky Davis, got one big story into his Boy Bugle! But I think he realizes now a boy shouldn't tackle a man's job before he grows up!"

In the next issue (*CMJ* #85-452) another Otto Binder-written and Joe Certa-illustrated story appears entitled, "The Boy Who Wanted to Be Famous." [See a future issue of ***The Blue Boy Chronicles*** for for a Sports section with further comments.] Captain Marvel Jr. helps a young man (adopted by a group of giants) come to terms with his "giant inferiority" and find his real human parents in "CMJ Meets the Littlest Giant" (*CMJ* #109-558). This tale was written by William Woolfolk and drawn by Bud Thompson.

As noted above, boys (both pre-teen and older) took a prominent role in sport stories, newspaper stories, and others. In these stories, Captain Marvel Jr. was often a friend, a mentor, guardian, and sometimes a babysitter to his youthful acquaintances. Even considering the above tales, these are not the total of the Captain Marvel Jr. "Boy" stories that appeared during the Fawcett years. Often boys and young men appeared in stories listed under other genres, especially stories concerning sports, school, and other themes. Captain Marvel Jr. was, as much as any other Golden Age heroes, a friend, guide, and mentor to boys of all ages.

The Visual Splendor of Captain Marvel Jr.

Mac Raboy was the original pacesetting artist on Captain Marvel Jr. and influenced all the other Blue Boy artists who came after him. From *MC* #25- 5. Art by Mac Raboy. © 1942 Fawcett Publications.

What follows is a brief survey of the artists who worked on Captain Marvel Jr. during his Golden Age tenure. Future issues of the Blue Boy Chronicles will have in-depth treatments of each of the major artists' work on the feature.

As in many Golden Age comic book series the matter of the artists who penciled and inked (as well as lettered and colored) Captain Marvel Jr. stories constitutes a complex graphic situation. Because the demand for comic book strips was so great the publishers resorted to buying stories and art from outside studios. These studios produced comic book stories in a factory-like manner using many artists to produce stories at a rapid rate. Some artists were pencillers, some inkers, some letterers, some did background while others did the major character figure drawings.

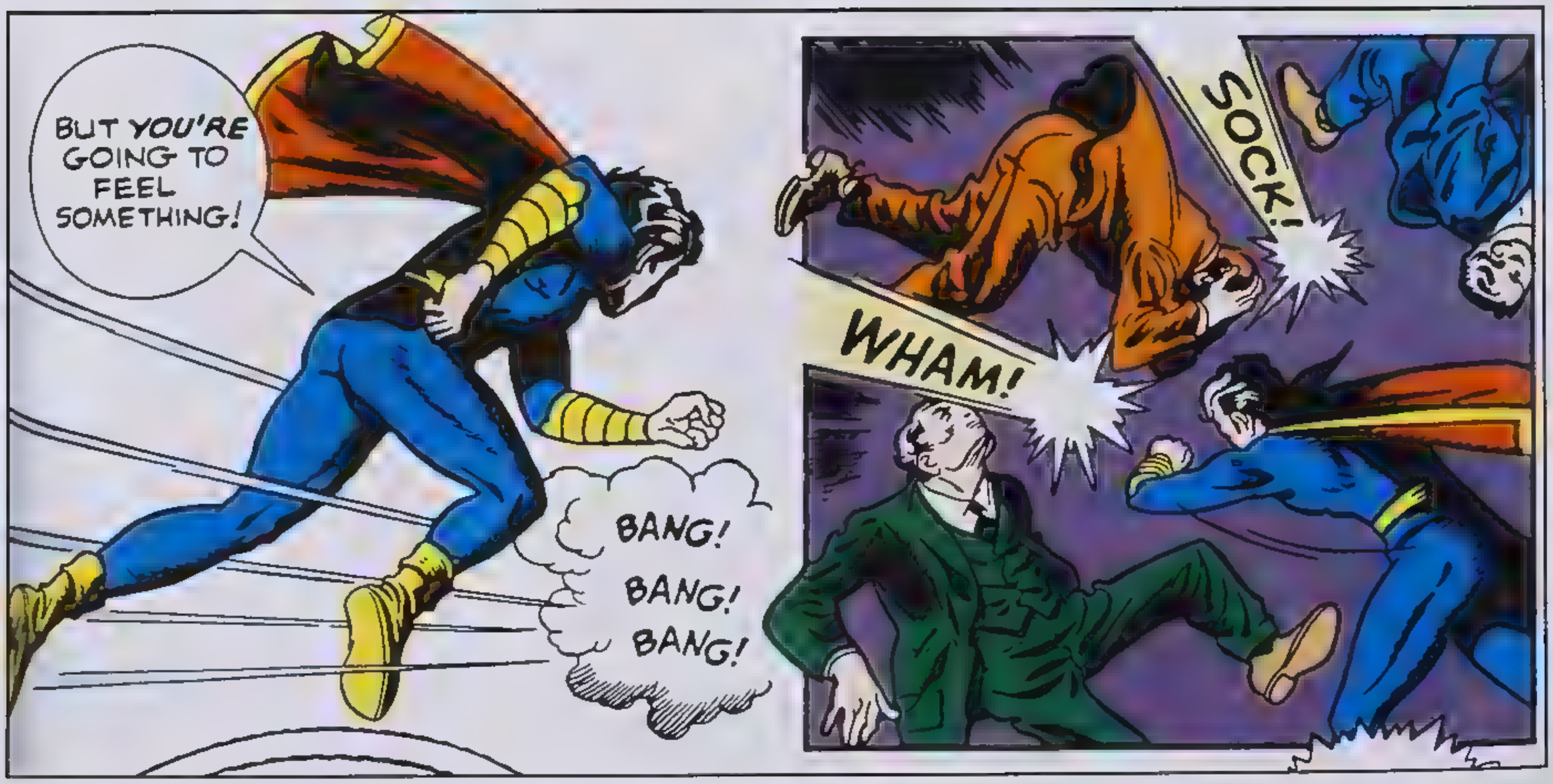
War Period

Most who have some knowledge of the early Captain Marvel Jr.'s artwork automatically tie Mac Raboy superb's graphic delineations to the strip. It is true that Raboy came up with the visual concept for the Blue Boy and was the first major artist to work on the strip. However since he was a slow and meticulous artist a number of other artists helped him with the series.[1]

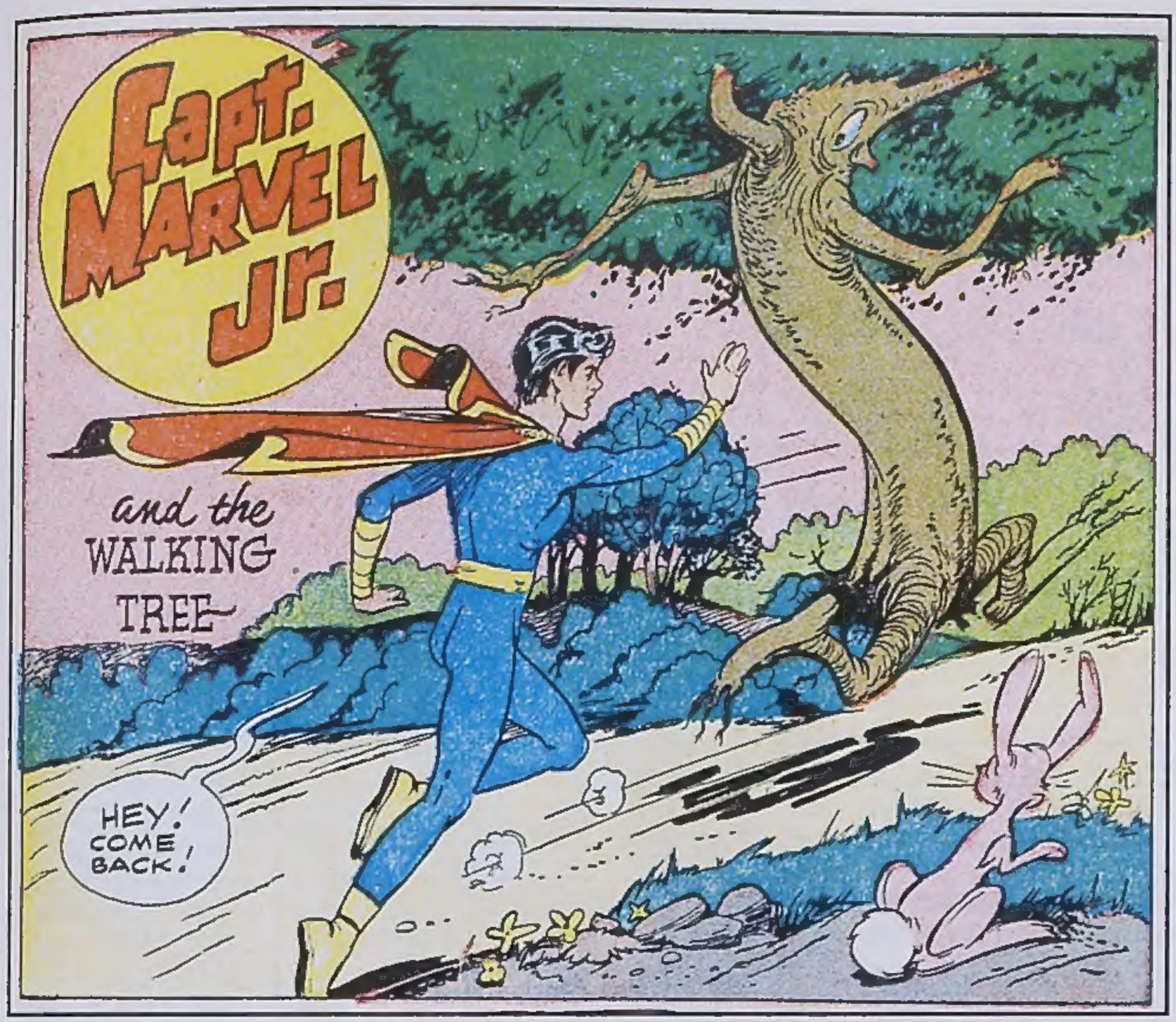
Raboy left Fawcett sometime in 1944 to work on the Green Lama for Ken Crossen's Spark Publications. Raboy's tenure on Captain Marvel Jr., while short, perhaps two and a half years, was highly influential over the rest of the comic's run. Gene MacDonald, William Mohler, and Bob Rogers (AKA Rubin Zubofsky) helped do background for Raboy and also later artist Bud Thompson.[2] Al Carreno was the second major artist to work on the Cap Jr. strip. His Milton Caniff-influenced work shows up in the first issue of the *Capt. Marvel Jr.* title, and he produced many stories during the war period. His work is certainly not as pretty as Raboy's and is stylistically very different from the original artist's work. Why the Fawcett editors chose Carreno to supplement Raboy's output can only be guessed at now. Perhaps it was Carreno's ability to churn out the pages on time and also many other potential artists were being drafted into the armed forces.

There are stories that first begin showing up in the war period and crossing over into the early post-war period with artwork that could be termed "pseudo-Mac Raboy." This work resembled the 1960s and 1970s work of Dan

Beautiful small panel from *CMJ* #20-111. Art possibly by Gene MacDonald. Mac Raboy (GCD), ©1945 Fawcett Publications.



Captain Marvel Jr. goes into action against a gang of crooks from *CMJ* #1-15. Art by Al Carreno, ©1942 Fawcett Publications.



Bud Thompson could draw a wide range of subject matter— from realistic crime to whimsical fantasy. He produced more story art for Captain Marvel Jr. than any other artist during the Golden Age. From *CMJ* #65-339. ©1948 Fawcett Publications.

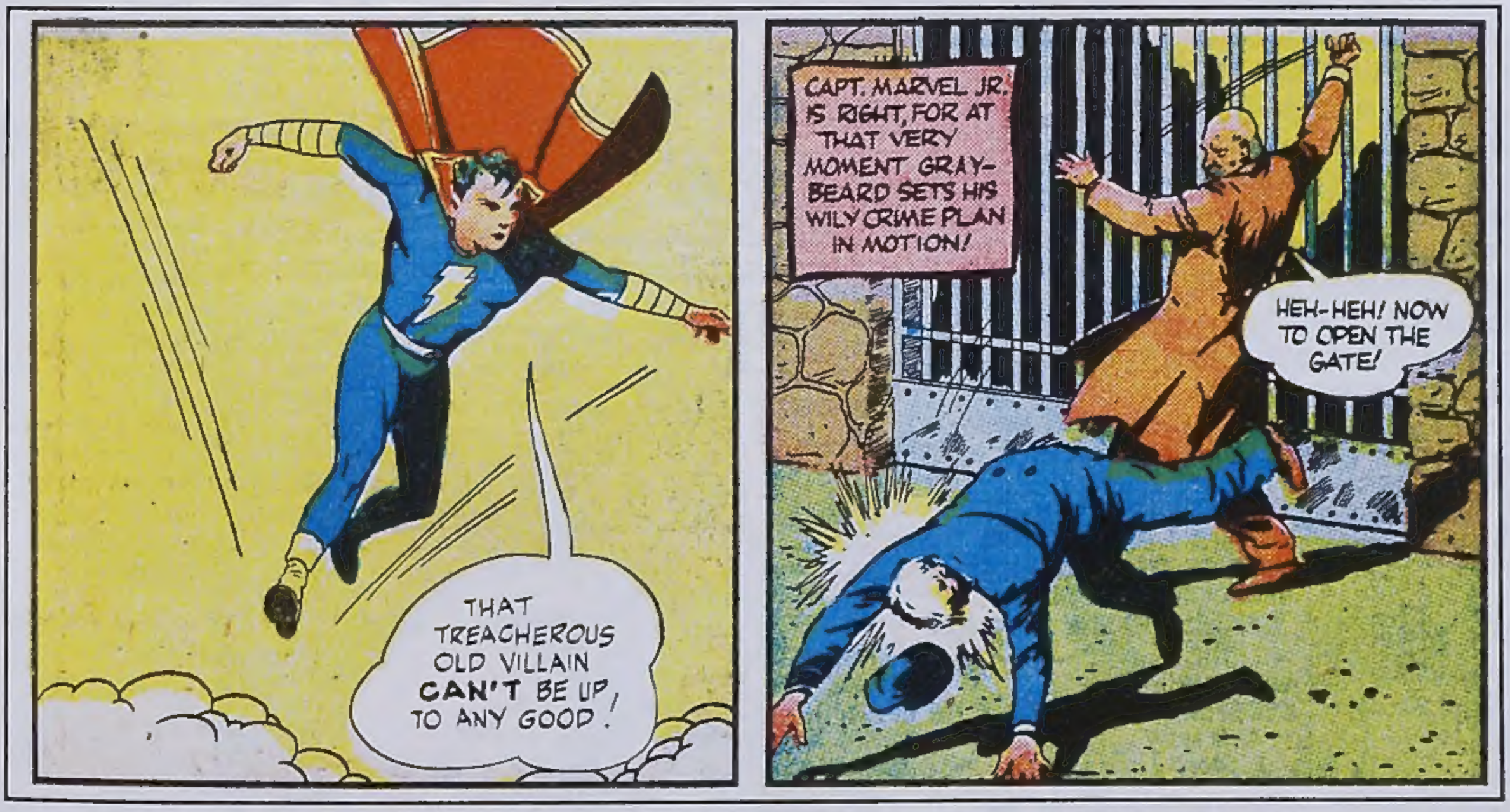
Adkins (a disciple of Wally Wood), only stiffer and not as well composed. While we can probably never know for sure, the previously named Raboy assistants are good candidates for the "pseudo-Mac Raboy". [3]

Another artist who produced art for the strip was August Froehlich. Froehlich drew comic strips for Fiction House, Pines, Smith & Street, Prize and other publishers during the 1940s. He produced Cap Jr. art during the late war years and the early post war period. Minute Man artist Phil Bard did at least one Cap Jr. story (*CMJ* #18-87). Also George Tuska (*CMJ* #10-61), Carl Pfeufer (*CMJ* #8-52), Dave Berg (*CMJ* #8-52) and Mauruce del Bourgo (*CMJ* #11-66).[4]

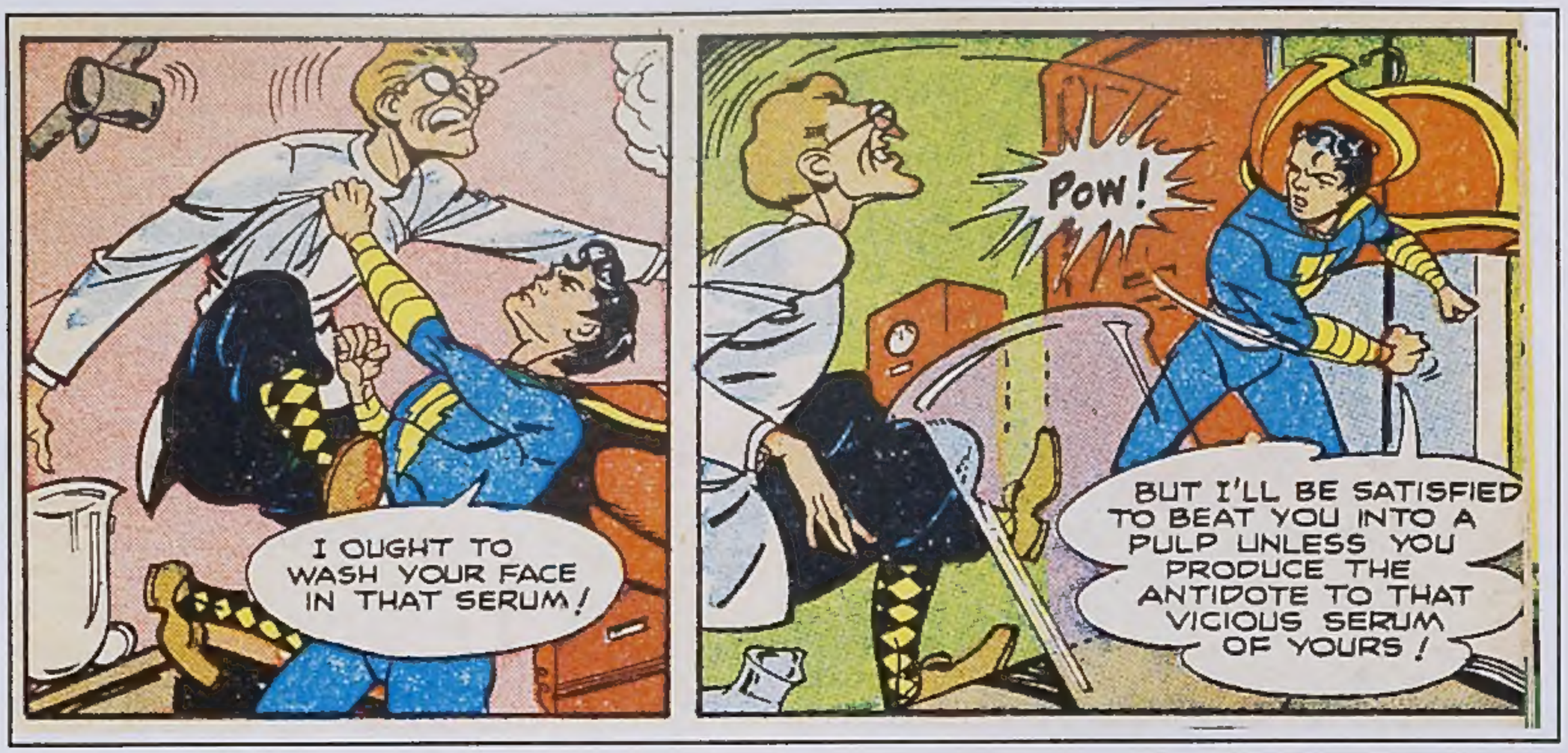
Comics historian Roger Hill mentions that Spectre co-creator Bernard Baily also produced art for Captain Marvel Jr. during the late war years.[5]

Post War Era

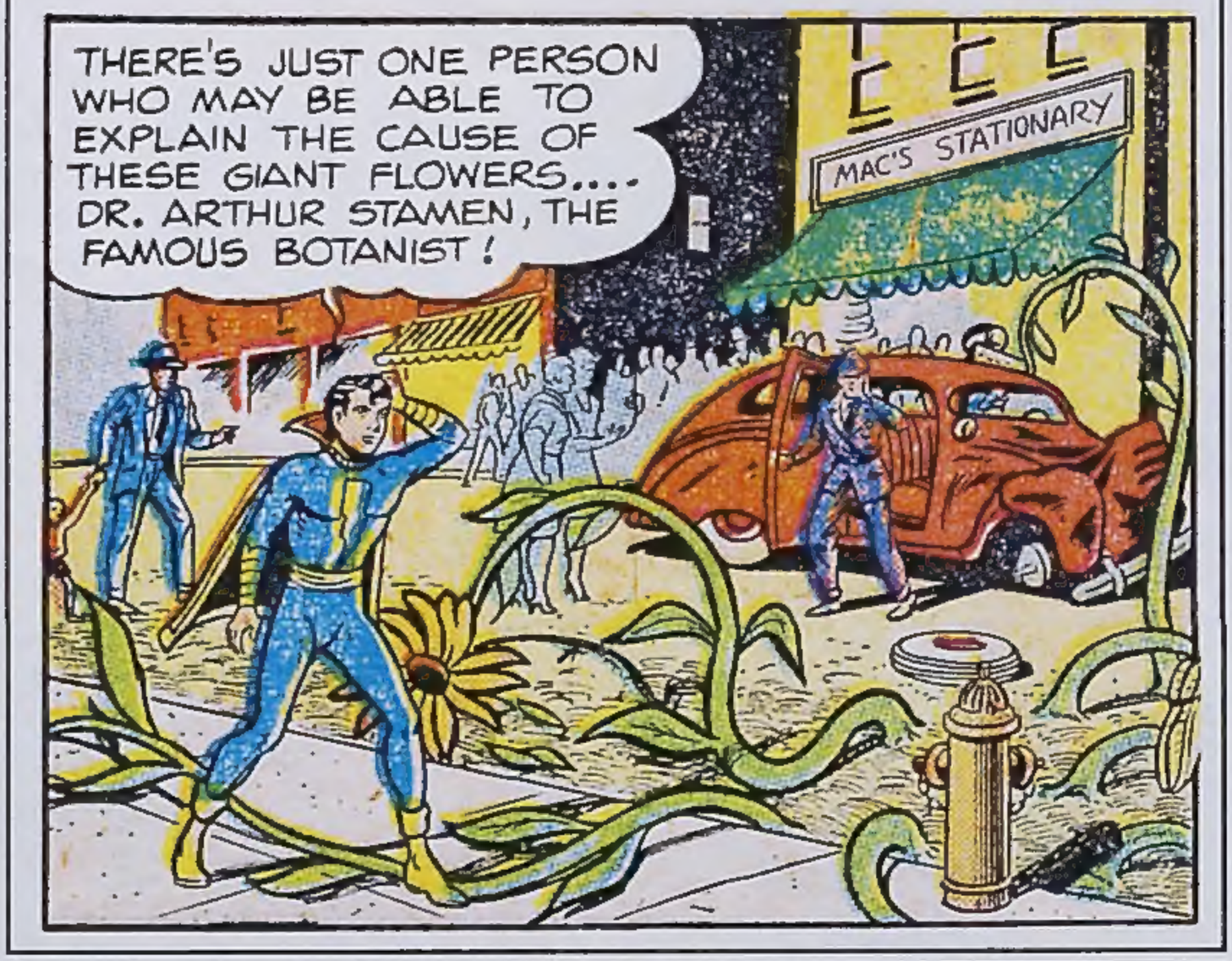
While Mac Raboy had moved on after only two or so years, his stylistic shadow loomed heavy over

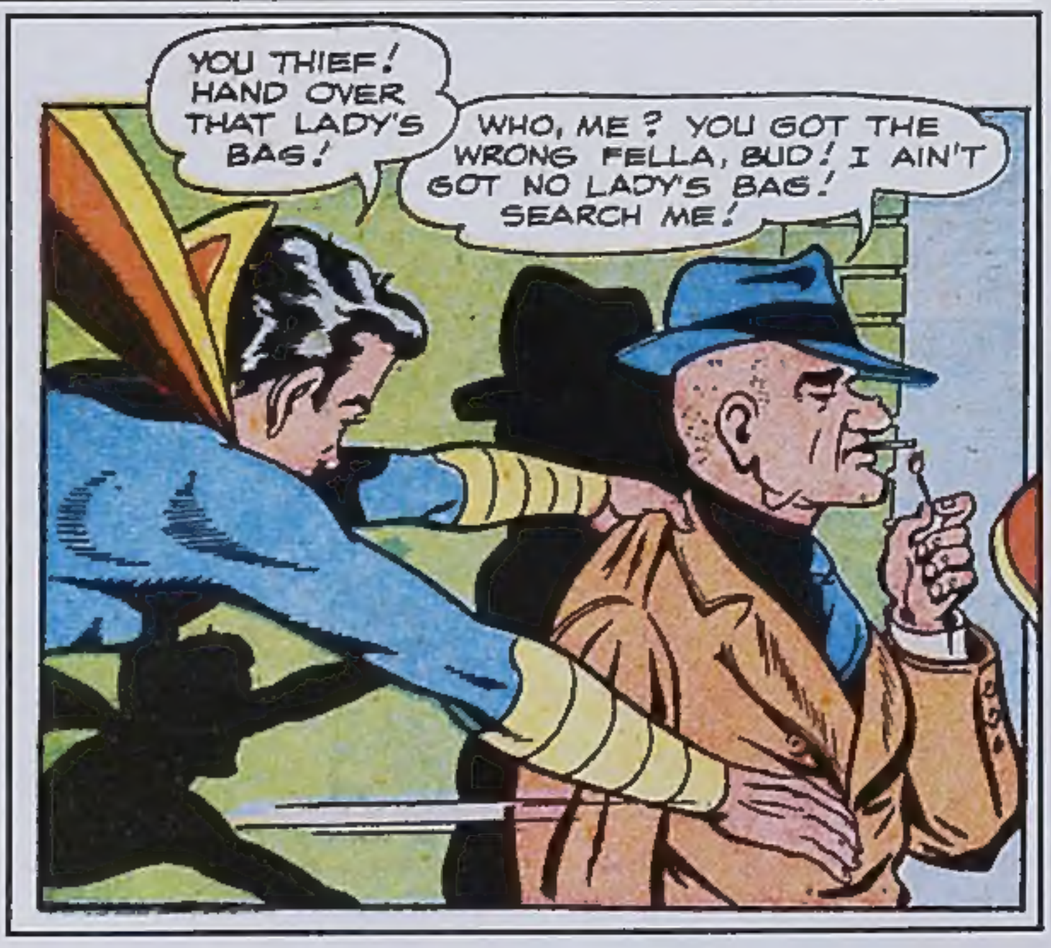

THAT TREACHEROUS OLD VILLAIN CAN'T BE UP TO ANY GOOD!
CAPT. MARVEL JR. IS RIGHT, FOR AT THAT VERY MOMENT GRAY-BEARD SETS HIS WILY CRIME PLAN IN MOTION!
HEH-HEH! NOW TO OPEN THE GATE!

August Froehlich did the art on a limited quantity of Captain Marvel Jr. stories during the mid-1940s, including the Greybeard trilogy. From *CMJ* #38-182. ©1946 Fawcett Publications.


I OUGHT TO WASH YOUR FACE IN THAT SERUM!
POW!
BUT I'LL BE SATISFIED TO BEAT YOU INTO A PULP UNLESS YOU PRODUCE THE ANTIDOTE TO THAT VICIOUS SERUM OF YOURS!

the art produced for the Captain Marvel Jr. strip during the post-war period. The editorial powers-that-be mandated the use of Raboy poses of Cap Jr. and Freddy Freeman whenever possible. This accomplished several things. First, it gave the illusion to less discerning readers that the "great" Blue Boy artist was still around. Second, with the exception of Captain Marvel himself, Captain Marvel Jr. was Fawcett's most popular super hero and the demand for new stories of the character was great. This helped to meet the need of producing new stories while the popularity for the character was the greatest. Third, how could you improve on perfection? Raboy's interpretation of the character set the standard so high that most otherwise competent artists could not hope to achieve the sheer level of draftsmanship Raboy attained. Through the post-war period, one can find tracings or photostats of the famous Raboy poses from his first year or two on the strip.


THERE'S JUST ONE PERSON WHO MAY BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN THE CAUSE OF THESE GIANT FLOWERS.... DR. ARTHUR STAMEN, THE FAMOUS BOTANIST!
MAC'S STATIONARY



Above: Joe Certa was a prolific CapJr. artist during the post war era. *CMJ* #64-332. ©1948 Fawcett Publications.

Left: Art by Charlie Tomsey, who drew many comic features for Fawcett and other companies during the 1940s. ID by P.C. Hamerlinck. *CMJ* #69-363. ©1949 Fawcett Publications.

Below: This panel (and the story it was taken from) appears to have some Bill Ward influence. However, according to Bails & Ware, Ward contributed CMJ art from only 1942-1943. P.C. Hamerlinck notes this is not Ward or Sheldon Moldoff art. *CMJ* #62-321. ©1948 Fawcett Publications.

Having said that, the post-war era was a period of transition in art as well as story content. Bud Thompson was hired to essentially replace Raboy. Thompson was a very good artist, in his own right, and did some splendid work on the strip. Researchers Bails and Ware note that Thompson started on the Cap Jr. strip in 1945[6]

SOMEONE SHOULD HAVE WARNED YOU THAT BULLETS DON'T HARM ME!
BOP!
GLURGGG!
.....AND INTO THE SOUP!
THIS WAY, MEN! WE'LL ESCAPE THROUGH THE KITCHEN!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP HIM!

Arguably the best visual story teller to work on the Captain Marvel Jr. strip was Kurt Schaffenberger. He was an expert on pacing and stage setting. He went on to work on the Captain Marvel feature and later the Superman family of books. From *MC* #95-336. ©1948 Fawcett Publications.

but there seems to be several stories from 1944 that bear his stylistic imprint. Like Raboy he did have assistants one of whom was Bob Rogers who worked with Thompson as well as Raboy.[7] Perhaps Thompson's most successful assistant was Joe Certa. Certa would go on to produce his own artwork for the series. Another up and coming artistic star was Kurt Schaffenberger, who had worked previously as a member of the Binder Studio on Ibis, Mr. Scarlet, Spy Smasher, and Bulletman. He would later work again on Ibis as well as the Marvel Family, Captain Marvel Jr. and leave his mark on the Captain Marvel strip. Two artists whose work superficially resembles each other are Bill Ward and Sheldon Moldoff. Bails indicates that Ward worked on the Capt. Marvel Jr. strip only in 1941-43.[8] However, the art spotters at the Grand Comics Database (GCD) claim a number of later Captain Marvel Jr. stories produced in both the post-war and the 1950s periods were also done by Ward.[9] During these periods Ward was working mostly for Quality Comics. But according to FCA Editor P.C. Hamerlinck the stories identified as Ward's work were actually done by Charlie Tomsey.[10]

The 1950s

The last period was dominated by Bud Thompson and his former assistant Joe Certa. Kurt Schaffenberger would contribute 10 or so stories as his talents were increasingly being used on the Marvel Family and Captain Marvel. There are some mysteries here as Bails reports that Rudy Palais contributed art to CMJ in 1953.[11]

This brief overview is the first in a series on the artists of Captain Marvel Jr. more of which will appear in future issues of the ***Blue Boy Chronicles***.

Endnotes

1. Here is a list of artists who worked on the Captain Marvel Jr. strip in the early years. From *The Who's Who of American Comic Books* Vol 1-4 p. 28 edited by Jerry Bails & Hames Ware. Red Moeller (1941-42) p. 157, Vincent Alascia (1941-42) p. 2, Ken Battefield (1941-42) p. 11, Pauline Loth (1942-43) p. 140, Emil Gershwin (1942-43) p. 74, William H. Ward (1941-1943) p. 280, John Belfi (1942-43) p. 12
2 "Bob Rogers in the 20th Century", *Alter Ego* 3:6, 2000, pp. 20-24, "Bob Rogers in the 20th Century" Part 2, *Alter Ego* 3:7 2001 pp. 18-23.
3. Gene McDonald (1944-48) *Who's Who of American Comic Books* Vol 2, p. 152 Jerry Bails & Hames Ware. Mac Raboy researcher Roger Hill seems to lean in this direction--see "Lightning Strikes Twice! by Roger Hill, Alter Ego 3:6, 2000, p. 11. Also see Steranko, *History of Comics* 2:27. GCD lists Gene McDonald as the artist on several CMJ stories including *MC* #48-95, 51-110, 54-123, 63-159, 68-180, 69-185, 70-191, 71-197.
4. Credits taken from the Grand Comics Database (GCD).
5. "Lightning Strikes Twice! by Roger Hill, Alter Ego 3:6, 2000, p. 11, 13. CMJ #2-21 "The Piped Piper of Himmler" is credited to Baily (GCD)
6. *The Who's Who of American Comic Books*. Volume 3:265
7. Nick Zuraw also assisted Thompson, Steranko, *History of Comics* 2:28
8. *The Who's Who of American Comic Books*. Volume 3:280
9. GCB credits several CMJs stories to Bill Ward from 1951-53. These include *MC* #120-496, *CMJ* #95-501, 503, *CMJ* #97-515, *MF* #58-512, *MC* ##122-517, #124-532, #124-539, #126-546, *MC* #127-553, #128-560, *MC* #120-567, #130-574, *MC* #131-581, *MC* #132-588, *MF* #84-599. Several of these attributions seem debatable. P.C. Hamerlinck contends these attributions are wrong.
10. *The Who's Who of American Comic Books*, (online edition), Charles Tomsey did work (pencil) on CMJ from 1948-49.
11. *The Who's Who of American Comic Books*. Volume 3:201

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